5-12-2021

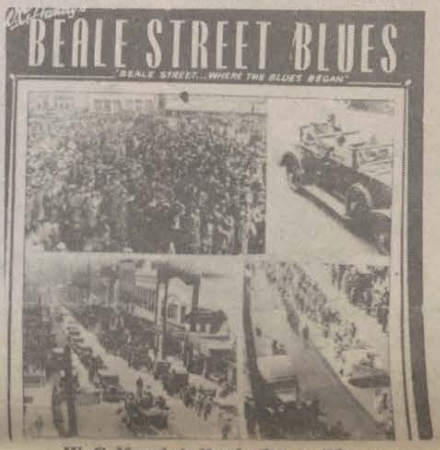
Black Heritage: Memphis & The Mid-South, 1981

BLACK HERITAGE:
Memphis & The Mid-South

Juvenile Symphony Band
of
Kortrecht High School
Memphis Tenn

Tom Lee

Marshals Escort James Meredith Into Ole Miss

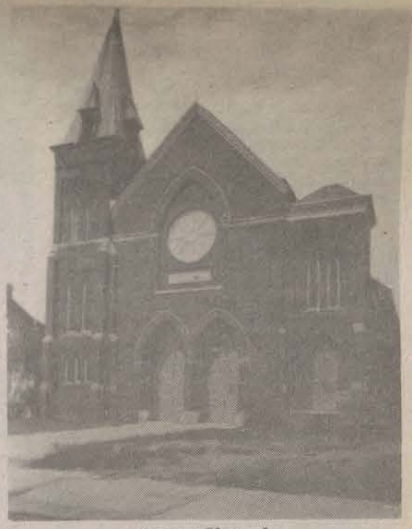


W. C. Handy's Beale Street Blues

Maxine Smith

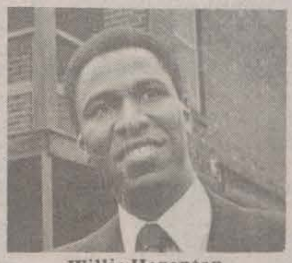
Larry Finch

Robert R. Church Sr.



Avery Chapel

Martin Luther King Jr.



Willie Herenton

Harold Ford

Robert R. Church, Jr., W. C. Handy,
G. W. Lee

Published By
The Commercial Appeal
Newspaper in the Classroom
Program

The Newspaper in the Classroom Program takes pleasure in presenting BLACK HERITAGE: Memphis & The Mid-South, in special recognition of the history, achievements and contributions of blacks in this area.

Although for many years recorded history has largely excluded blacks, recent work by area historians is helping correct this oversight.

FOLKLORE / How To Preserve Your Heritage

By Dr. George McDaniel

(George McDaniel is Director of Research and Special Projects at the Center for Southern Folklore. A former historian with the Smithsonian Institute, he is author of Hearth & Home: Preserving Traditional America.)

"When an old man dies, a library burns to the ground" - proverb. Our ancestors hold keys to an untold history - one that's important to us individually and to the nation. It's especially true of black history where there are few written records.

All of us know that things don't happen just because of the acts of a few great leaders. A lot of other people were there, too. People like your grandfather, grandmother or aunt. It was their work and their skills to farm the land and build the cities. But there's a story history books usually ignore.

Wherever you go, you carry a historical suitcase packed with events that have shaped your parents and in turn have influenced you.

The history of your ancestors may not be known to many, but it is critical for you to understand it. Wherever you go, you carry a historical suitcase packed with events that have shaped your parents and in turn have influenced you. And if you are to understand yourself more fully, you need to know what's packed away in there. That means becoming your own personal historian - a detective tracking down your past by talking with your parents, aunts and uncles. Only you can find and preserve their memories before they are lost forever.

Time is running out because so many rich historical resources are not safeguarded in libraries and museums. It is therefore critical for you as teachers and students to try to locate and preserve them.

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Prepared by the Newspaper in the Classroom Department of The Commercial Appeal, BLACK HERITAGE: Memphis & The Mid-South would not have been possible without the guidance of Selma Lewis, Marjean Kremer, Dr. Juanita Williamson, Ron Walter and Dr. Robert Waller, among others, who directed the editors to many contributors and to much valuable information contained herein.

Special thanks is due all contributors who gave freely of their time in writing the articles for this tabloid.

The purpose of this material is 1) to help develop informed citizens by encouraging critical daily newspaper reading; 2) to present role models revealing varied aspects of black culture; 3) to provide students with information on black history and 4) to encourage students to preserve their family, school and community heritage.

The Center for Southern Folklore is a non-profit organization that is helping preserve a piece of the South through films, records, slide shows, books and the Center for Southern Folklore Magazine. To order materials, write Center for Southern Folklore, 1216 Peabody Ave., P.O. Box 40188S, Memphis TN 38104 or call (901) 726-4205.

U. S. Farm Center for Southern Folklore
Old Family Photo

Booker T. Washington High School Homecoming Parade

Ernest Withers

Raymond Summers, Albany Institute of Hist. Arts
Student Proudly Displays A Prized Family Photograph

BLACK HERITAGE: Memphis & The Mid-South
Editor: Bill Bailey
Assistant Editor: Shirley Williams

Explore Your Own Community For Data

If you have a tape recorder, you should tape interviews with older relatives and neighbors. Even without this equipment, a pencil and paper will do fine. Do not depend on your memory. Record the information on film, on tape or on paper.

Each of you will have your own approach, but here are a few questions which might serve as guides:

1. If you could have stood in front of your school or your house 50 years ago, what would you have seen? What buildings and roads were there?

2. Are there any older relatives or neighbors that could help you remember about their ancestors?

3. We are all immigrants and travelers. Why did your ancestors settle in your community? When? Where did they come from?

4. What is soul food? Why did it develop? How did older people learn to prepare it? How has it changed over the years?

5. What are the origins of your family names? Can your relatives help you make a family tree?

6. What customs or traditions are part of your family, church and community?

7. What stories do your family and neighbors know about major events in black history - such as slavery, the Civil War, Emancipation, Reconstruction, the Depression, or the Civil Rights Movement?

8. Are their buildings still standing where your ancestors lived, worked or visited? Can you tour these areas with an older relative or neighbor who can show you the world your ancestors knew?

9. What resources do older relatives have that would help document your heritage, such as family Bibles, old photographs, quilts, furniture, tools or other things?

10. If you were preparing your history for your children, what resources would you preserve? What experiences would you write down?

Profiles Reveal Vitality Of Endangered Culture

Our heritage is endangered. Cafes that once served homemade pies have been replaced by fast-food chains offering pre-packaged food. The Beale Street bars that housed the blues are now empty shells. At the Center for Southern Folklore we're trying to preserve this rich heritage.

Center Records Work Of Artists, Others Who Preserve Culture

Our heritage is endangered. Cafes that once served homemade pies have been replaced by fast food chains offering pre-packaged food. The Beale Street bars that housed the blues are now empty shells. At the Center for Southern Folklore we're trying to preserve this rich heritage. Roaming back roads or urban side streets, we record and film folk artists and craftspeople whose work, like blues music, shows the vitality of black culture. Here are just a few of the people we've recorded to give you an idea of the possibilities. You may find in your own community. You can learn more about these people and others through our films and exhibits which are available to school systems.

Bill Ferris, Southern Folklore Center
'Peck' Clark Proudly Displays His Baskets

Pecolia Warner

The beautiful quilts of **Pecolia Warner** are recognized as vibrant expressions of black art. They have traveled across country in an exhibit prepared by the Smithsonian Institution. Mrs. Warner is featured in the Center's film, *Four Women Artists*.

"I've been making quilts ever since I knew my mother doing it. When I was growing up, she used to have quilting bees. Seven or eight women would sit there, talking and working. I used to love to get up under the quilting frame and watch how they kept their needles working.

"Making quilts is my calling. Lots of them are made-up quilts. See, there's no pattern for them. I just sit down and start sewing them and I draw it out in my own mind.

"I guess I'm never going to stop quilting. It keeps my mind together. I wouldn't want nothing to happen to my quilts after I pass on. I want people to keep them to remember me by. They'll say, 'Well, I knew one old lady, that's all she did was to piece quilts.'"

Bill Ferris, Southern Folklore Center
Pecolia Warner Finds Quilt-Making Her Calling

Othar Turner

Othar Turner is a man of many talents. As a youth, he learned from older people in the community to play the fife, a flute-like instrument that he made from cane. Scholars recognize his music as a direct link to the fife's African heritage. Turner is featured in the Center's film *Gravel Springs Fife and Drum*.

Turner talks about growing up and learning to play the fife:

"I could dance, I could sing, ride horses, chop cotton and plow, whoop and holler, cut somersets, do all that stuff.

"I started making a cane and blowing a cane when I was 13 years old. I just kept tuning and tuning and blowing and tuning. The more perfect you do a thing, the more perfect it comes to you. So, I tried and tried and I learned it. That's my make. Nobody trained me, and I take that from myself."

Bill Ferris, Southern Folklore Center
Othar Turner Blows A Cane

Leon 'Peck' Clark

Since the days of slavery, the church has been a centre to the black community. It's a place for social gatherings and for spiritual expression. The communion with God raised the pains of the present and gave hope for the future.

Leon 'Peck' Clark of Sharon, Miss., featured in the Center's film, *Leon 'Peck' Clark: Basket-maker* is an excellent traditional craftsman. His religious conversion is integral to his life. Note especially the vivid images he uses to tell the power of the experience:

"I was on my way to church and I seen my old self leave me just as natural as I ever saw anything in my life. It went on east of me."

Have you heard family or community members talk of religious experiences? How did they describe them?

Deaconesses At Old St. Paul Baptist Church

Memphis Red Sox

Traveling Exhibit Offers Cultural Highlights

The L. O. Taylor Collection

In your search for important black resources, remember that old photographs are especially valuable. They have a story to tell if you ask questions of them. Examine those on these pages for a minute and try to imagine the lives of these people.

These photographs were taken from the 1920s to the 1950s by an outstanding man, Rev. L. O. Taylor. They are excellent examples of a black historical resource that has been preserved and that may be the most compelling exhibit available from the Center.

A word about Rev. L. O. Taylor. He inspired many people in Memphis, and his life reflected many of the best elements of the black heritage. He was "like a father" to **Rev. James Netters**, a present-day leader in Memphis. He even photographed Netter's wedding, shown on this page. Netters remembers Rev. Taylor:

He acted in the spirit of community. It was a matter of brotherly love and concern for his neighbors and his community. He was always trying to find out where women were not, and if there was nobody there to sweep the floor or make up the bed or feed them, he would. He'd ... then call somebody and tell them to come over the next day and do something . . . He wouldn't leave there until something was done. Even if he had to do it himself. He was community. He was, in spirit.

Futhermore, Rev. Taylor was a teacher. As Rev. Netters explains:

One of the things I gleaned from him most was how to think and how to look at life, not just what's on the surface, but what is necessary for any success. . . He taught me always to be an investigator, searching and looking for more than what you actually see.

Examine Taylor's photographs as if you too were an investigator. Ask yourself the basic questions of a historian. What is happening? When? Where? Why? What has changed? What remains the same?

Businessmen In Front Of Tri-State Bank

Rev. James Netters' Wedding Photograph

Hooks Brothers Photography Captures Past

Spirit Of Beale Street

Special thanks to Charles Hooks who provided many of the photos in this tabloid.

Alonzo Locke With The Peabody Hotel Staff

Howe Institute

Meeting Inside Church Park Auditorium On Beale Street

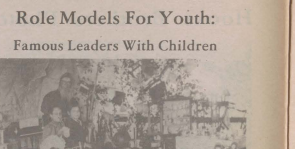
Congregation In Front Of Collins Street Church

Negro American League President Dr. J. B. Martin and Mrs. Martin

Role Models For Youth:

Famous Leaders With Children

The Martin Luther King Jr. Family



Memphis Public Library & Information Center, Memphis & Shelby County Collection-MSC

Julia Hooks Plays Santa To Annette and Robert Church, Jr.

The Willie W. Herenton Family

Rev. Brewster And Neighborhood Children L. R. Taylor

The Harold Ford Family

W. C. Handy And An Involved Student

By Selma Lewis
and Marjean Kremer

(Editor's Note: Many Mid-South blacks' legacy ignored by history was lost full and important lives. Three years ago, The Memphis Press-Scimitar Association assigned then volunteers Selma Lewis and Marjean Kremer to do research in the area in an attempt to discover and preserve these unrecorded days.

All Memphians who care about their heritage owe much to these two historians. Without them, and others working with them, much of what we know about black history in Memphis would have been lost.

From extensive research, including more than 200 taped interviews, the following previously unpublished stories have been selected.)

Lucky Sharp And Blair T. Mont.

Douglas School was a focal point for community relations in the 1930s. In many ways it was a model for schools of today, declared Dr. Mary Rozzell, who related how the Douglas community weathered the Depression of the 30s.

"The only source of water in the Douglas neighborhood was a pump located at the school, which had to be primed.

"The school became the center for most community activities, so much so that the P.T.A. paid to have the school wired for electricity, provided pianos for the school and sponsored a neighborhood scout troop.

"To provide hot school lunches, the P.T.A. contacted area merchants who furnished meat products to be used. Also the merchants offered sandwiches and soft drinks for sale.

"The woman at Douglas School was **Lucky Sharpe**, a man of great vision. Because of the cooperative school and parent relationship, he was able to start a garden project. Promoted by the school, the people of the community did lots of gardening and canning. During the hardest days of the Depression, no one went hungry there.

"Douglas School was even able to furnish food and supplies for refugees from the flood of 1937. That same year Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of the president of the United States, came to see the garden project at its annual food show."

Hayes Starts First Business

T. H. Hayes and Sons Funeral Home, established in 1927, was the first black-owned business in Memphis.

According to **Thomas J. Hayes,** whose father began the business, "At that time, all funeral business was conducted downtown by white folks at the Hotz-Thompson Brothers funeral home on Main Street. They would bury colored people only in the back door of their place in an alley."

Black attorney **B. F. Booth,** a good friend of the elder Hayes, suggested he go into the funeral business, "both as a business venture and to fill a need."

There were no automobiles then, so four-passenger buggies were used to pull caskets. In the wintertime, a metal block could be heated, covered with carpet and placed inside the buggy. The families inside the buggies stayed warm, even if the buggy driver sat outside.

T. H. Hayes had no formal education as a child, but, as a grown man, although large in stature, he went to night school. T. H. Fisher's Booker T. Institute, Hayes finished the third grade and, in the same-sized seat the little children occupied.

Memphis Public Library & Information Center, Memphis & Shelby County Collection-MSC

T. H. Hayes
Crusader Flees

Mrs. Lottie Dortch recalls the night she fled Memphis as a hunted anti-lynching crusader, had to make a hurried escape from Memphis.

Angered by the lynching of three young black men in Memphis in 1892, Miss Wells, who was part owner of the *Memphis Free Speech and Headlight*, wrote scathing editorials and articles about the events.

Soon after, she found her outspoken writings, destroyed the newspaper office and press.

Forced to flee from the mob's wrath in the middle of the night, Miss Wells sought refuge in the home of Mrs. Dortch's grandparents, Mrs. Dortch's grandfather, who was light enough to appear white, rented a horse and buggy and drove the heavily-veiled Miss Wells out of town to Millington. There she boarded a train for her escape to the north.

Memphis Public Library & Information Center, Memphis & Shelby County Collection, MSC

Ida B. Wells' Book On Lynchings

MUSIC / Historic Beale Street 'The Home Of The Blues'
UNRECORDED HISTORY/Stories Reveal Events

"The blues were so called, because they were not altogether black, or white, but in-between . . . blue."

"Not Black Or White, But Blue"

Speaking of the Beale Street he knew in the 1930s, Nat D. Williams, former teacher at Booker T. Washington High School, historian and radio personality, said, "Memphis was a stopping place for most Negro entertainers, halfway between New Orleans and Chicago."

Memphis had black hotels, the Traveler's Hotel being the top one. "It had black theaters, among them the Old Daisy, which was the home of the blues," Mr. Williams recalls. "The Old Daisy had rugs on the floor, and black aristocrats went there to see both movies and live entertainment.

"Among the entertainers were 'Gatemouth' Moore, who was both minister and entertainer; Rufus Thomas, who got his start on Beale Street; Furry Lewis and 'Little Laura', who entertained the 'ordinary' people.

"The blues were so called because they were not altogether black, or white, but in-between . . . blue. They were accepted at first as dirty and too sexy, but they were also accepted as 'you know how a widow really felt,' and therefore, were basically religious.

"Beale Street was the dividing line between the black people of Memphis only began to die down in the 1960s, for Beale Street, when you were a light-skinned man it meant one thing to you and when you were a brown-skinned man it meant another. When you were a black-skinned man it meant still another. The only time you could get together as Negro was accepted, even on Beale Street, was when he was a preacher or a good tap dancer."

Universal Life Defies Crump

Mrs. A. W. Willis, Sr., whose husband was one of the founders of the Universal Life Insurance Company, remembers the early days of what is now one of the largest black-owned insurance companies in the United States.

"In its early existence, the company had severe strains on its existence as a black business. There were many restrictions from the state of Tennessee, and it also had to deal with Ed Crump, the political boss of the city of Memphis.

"Starting in the early 1930s, the business declared a dividend to be distributed to stockholders each year, the first being five cents on the dollar per share. Mr. Crump, who was the attorney of the company, Dr. A. E. Walker, that the company was not strong enough to declare a dividend.

"Attorney Lucius Burch, prominent civic leader and advocate of civil rights, came to their defense, saying that as a private company they had a perfect right to do so.

"The company had much competition from other companies, both black and white. What kept the company going was that the officers were like a family. Mr. Crump resented the success of University Life Insurance. He wanted to be guardian or father and wanted black folks to remain children. But the company was independent and did not accept his dictation."

Old Daisy Theater On Beale Street

Musician Furry Lewis

No Longer Blinded By Color

Longtime pastor of the Trigg Avenue Baptist Church, the Rev. Herbert W. Brewster recalls an incident that occurred at the beginning of his Memphis ministry.

"I had been in the evening when I left the church to drive home. Stalled on the tracks in front of me, a car was blocking my way. From inside it, I could see a white hand waving, summoning me forward.

"Never since have I been so blinded by color."

(Continued on Page 8)

HEROES / Area Remembers Bravery Of Lee, Webb

By Selma Lewis
and Margaret Keeler
(Vista Volunteers)

Lee Saves Travelers

"It seemed that Lee came out of nowhere," said one of the 32 people whom the black hero pulled out of the cold waters of Mississippi River on May 4, 1927, after their U. S. Engineers' steamboat, the Norman, had sunk.

The 20-year-old Tom Lee was returning to Memphis from Helena, Ark. He was alone aboard the Zev, a 28-foot inboard, weather-beaten motor boat owned by the company for which Lee worked.

Lee was a short distance from the Norman when he saw the larger boat capsize. He quickly headed his skiff toward the mass of drowning people. Wordlessly he pulled them into his craft and took them to the safety of the distant shore.

Calmly, with no regard to his own safety, for the Zev was very small—by the Zev could be swamped, he returned twice more to the scene of the disaster. After bringing his last group to shore, Lee collected driftwood and built a fire for the shivering survivors.

Lee then returned to the Zev to spend the night alone, secured to the river for others who might have survived. It was not until much later that it was discovered that the poorly-educated Lee could not read or write simple-handed compass. It would then be fast current of the swollen Mississippi, had once learned to swim.

Memphis has not forgotten its river hero. A north Memphis swimming pool was named in honor of the man who could not swim, yet saved so many people from drowning.

The inscription on the monument erected at Tom Lee Park, at the foot of Beale Street on the Mississippi River, reads in part, " . . . but he was a finer monument than this, man to man. A monument of kindliness, generosity courage and highest of heart. His deeds were scattered everywhere that day and into eternity. This monument was erected by the grateful people of Memphis."

Monument in Tom Lee Park

Suddenly, the brakes slammed on the streetcar and passengers were catapulted another train stalled on the main line.

Casey shouted back, "Jump, Sim, jump." Those were his last words. Sim jelled back, "You jump too." But Casey didn't leave his post.

Casey blows the whistle, tells the fireman to jump

Casey Jones, the locomotive engineer, was a brave man. Casey's body had leaped to safety from the cab of his locomotive, but Casey's body had been a twisted rail, a bolt of iron stabbed through his heart. Casey was dead.

Casey Jones was a brave man. He had stayed with the train and died with it. His hand still clutched the broken cord

Sim Webb Remembers

(Editor's note: There are many versions of Casey and Webb's train wreck because the incident is now legendary. The following is one version, as remembered by the Commercial Appeal's Jack Yelton.)

Sim Webb was Casey Jones' fireman the fateful night of April 30, 1900, when the Cannonball Express roared down the line between Memphis and Canton, Miss., doing 70 mph and better. Casey and Sim — were behind time to replace another crew — tried to make up the lost time.

The Cannonball was already late pulling out of Memphis. Casey — true to his hard-driving reputation — ordered Webb to pour on the coal.

Casey vowed they'd make Canton on time as they roared through the countryside at more than 100 miles an hour, and never less than 65.

"Fireman says, 'Casey, you're running too fast.'

You run that blackboard the last station without stopping.

Casey says, 'I believe we'll make it through.'

For she steams a lot better than I ever knew!"

Webb recovered and continued his railroad career.

"Headaches and heartaches and all kinds of pain

They ain't apart from a railroad train.

Stories of brave men, noble and grand

Belong to the life of a railroad man.

Webb was injured again in 1918 when a locomotive toppled with a weakened trestle near Coldwater, Miss.

Mourning his fireman Webb and Casey's widow fought bitterly against those who said Casey lived only in the song. Both were instrumental in setting up the Casey Jones Home and Railroad Museum at Jackson, Tenn.

Artists' Concept Of Engineer Casey Jones

Voting, Cotton Jubilee Become Realities

(Continued from Page 7)

Rev. Alcorn Goes To Vote

Born near Collierville before the turn of the century, Rev. Owen Bowlin Alcorn came to Memphis in 1914 to attend LeMoyne College. This nonagenarian elder of the Jackson District of the C.M.E. Church recalls his experiences with the Ku Klux Klan in 1921, an experience he will not forget.

The Klan had fielded its own candidates for the county court, but realized that they would be defeated if the blacks voted. Alcorn says he can still picture 15 or 20 Klansmen, hot hooded, "sitting on their horses in front of the polls" to keep blacks from voting. "Don't come to the polls tomorrow," "There's a time when, even if you're afraid, something in you pushes on," Alcorn says quietly.

He remembers calling Sherriff Will White, who in turn called "Boss" Crump, who told him he could vote if Crump had to deputize every man in Shelby County.

Election day arrived and Alcorn rode the bus from White Station, where he taught school, to the court square in Collierville. He arrived less than 30 minutes before the polls closed.

"The crowd all looked at me hard," he recalls, "but I pushed my way through to vote. I had to wait a long time for a receipt. I offered a half dollar money so I could get the receipt and get back in time. When I returned, the crowd yelled, 'Nigger, that's a colored nigger! Went home and got his receipt!"

of that whippoorwill whistle cord, the sound of which was known up and down the line as Casey's sound.

Reflecting on the wreck, this convicted Sage magazine, "The tragic miracle of it was how Casey stopped that train so fast in just those fleeting moments, to save the lives of everyone . . .

but himself.

"He didn't Casey jump! "I can't answer that," said Sim. "I believed at first that he left when his duty to stick to the train was done, and my escape was the result. But people kept telling me, on other hand, there wasn't enough time for thinking. I'd have to say that Casey instinctively did what appeared to be right. It cost him his life, but it saved many others."

Cotton Maker's Jubilee Brings Merriment

Horses Inspires Cotton Jubilee

Civic leader Mrs. R. Q. Venson vividly recalls the day her husband, the late Dr. Venson, was inspired to found the Cotton Makers' Jubilee.

Dr. and Mrs. R. Q. Venson had thought they were providing their 5-year-old nephew with a special treat one day in 1935, when they took the youngster to view a local parade.

But the youngster was strangely silent as he viewed the parade from the top his mother's lap.

After the parade ended, the V-nons asked the boy if he had enjoyed the spectacle. He only shook his head negatively. When asked why not, he replied, "All the Negro men were horses." At that time the only role for blacks was that of pulling the carriages for the various floats.

Both Dr. and Mrs. Venson were deeply disturbed that this was the image the parade projected. A child of his race, Dr. Venson decided to start the Cotton Maker's Jubilee, with its own parades and merriment.

The Jubilee today coincides with the Cotton Carnival, but remains a separate entity. Mrs. Venson believes the Jubilee should remain separate because merging would cause a loss of black heritage and culture, although today the Carnival and Jubilee do join forces for some of the parades.

Because of the dedication of a black dentist and his friends, no black child will ever again view his race in such a limited way at Carnival time.

MUSIC / Historic Beale Street, 'The Home Of The Blues'

By Harry E. Godwin (ASCAP)

Mr. Godwin, a musicologist, has studied early classic Blues and Traditional Jazz for 25 years. On the Memphis scene he organized and directed the Jazz and Blues Festivals of the annual Memphis Cotton Carnival for seven years beginning in 1967 through 1973.

Godwin has published several songs, three of which have been played on "Voice of America."

He was a United States Senate's 1978 presidentially proclaimed Memphis "Home of the Blues" Commemorative Resolution sponsored jointly by Senators S. I. Hayakawa, Howard Baker and Lan Sasser.

Presently a member of the newly founded Shelby County Music Commission, Godwin serves as American manager for the Yorkshire Symphonia Slim.

Godwin will host an eight-part series on the story of traditional Jazz and blues at Memphis State University in 1981. For more information on this course, call 454-2380.

Mr. Godwin says he is available to speak to gatherings of students and kinds of pain

They ain't apart from a railroad train.

Stories of brave men, noble and grand

Belong to the life of a railroad man.

Webb was injured again in 1918 when a locomotive toppled with a weakened trestle near Coldwater, Miss.

Mourning his fireman Webb and Casey's widow fought bitterly against those who said Casey lived only in the song. Both were instrumental in setting up the Casey Jones Home and Railroad Museum at Jackson, Tenn.

And the life on Beale Street was exciting. . . . The atmosphere made it seem it was Saturday night. A man could get a drink or two and find some night life; something to cheer about after a long week in the hot sun of hoeing or chopping cotton. Music was there constantly. . . .

Blacks came to Memphis from all over the Delta from every walk of life, business and pleasure, and in Memphis it was "Beale Street Mama" all the way.

The words of George W. Lee in his book "Beale Street: Cross Section of the Beale Street of years ago" — Beale Street was the unique center where men and women of African descent waged a relentless battle to make contact with Western Civilization . . .

And the life on Beale Street was exciting as well. The atmosphere made it seem to be always Saturday night. A man could get a drink or two and find some night life; something to cheer about after a long week in the hot sun of hoeing or chopping cotton. Music was there constantly and the atmosphere was conducive to musicians, as a gathering place.

These then were the "race" records. In general they could not even be found in the record stores. At this time, the white public knew nothing of them. They were sold by pullman porters, in beauty parlors, at shoeshine stands, grocery stores, etc. And these "race" records spread the blues to the nation and world. It is one of the many unpercieved facets of that era that were contemptuous of this music at first, referring to it as "lowdown stuff." Later, however, and especially after composer George Gershwin took the blues to heart, millions of blacks were proud to call them their most enduring gift to our nation's song history.

W. C. Handy: Father of the Blues

William Christopher Handy loved Beale Street and in his autobiography, *Father of the Blues*, that love is what shines brightest. Handy, his very early days in Florence, Ala., where he was born in 1873.

Handy, by 1909, had become a well-traveled and proficient musician. He was approached by the campaign managers of E. H. Crump, who was running for mayor of Memphis in that year. Crump, a political genius in the making, wanted a suitable ditty or tune to be used as the theme of the Crump campaign.

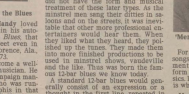
Handy had heard, in his travels, the local tunes of the Negro workers and levee camps that would soon become known as the blues. He had written much music from this strong "Down Home" musical vein. But he saw an opportunity now to "try something else" on an unsuspecting public. He came up with "Mr. Crump Don't Like to Lose," and the rest is history. To tell the story of how the blacks felt about Crump's victory, Handy wrote "Mr. Crump Has Been Elected."

"Mr. Crump Don't 'Low" caught on at once. Crump was elected and Handy was launched on his career as a writer. Three years later in 1912, Handy rewrote and published "Mr. Crump" — now known as "Memphis Blues" — generally considered to be the first composed and published blues. And the blues were on their way.

The term "blues" is necessarily very general. The blues probably were first and played in rural areas — in the barrelhouses, juke joints, etc. — in many quite different forms and styles, ranging from the "down home" country blues of the Mississippi Delta region — the singing and the thought behind the music — to the more formal but many unacceptable ditties and "boogie woogie" that became musically and socially acceptable to a wider public.

Race Records In The 1920s

There was a large exodus of southern blacks to northern cities around the 1920s, especially to Chicago, where working conditions and income were far better than in the rural south. A market developed for "down home" music for the listening pleasure of homesick southern blacks living in the north. They longed for the sounds of the "Delta Blues" — the blues transplanted blacks found that for 25 or 30 cents they could hear in their homes such as Bessie Smith, Alberta Hunter and Ma Rainey telling them the old familiar stories.



'Ma' Rainey

Form Known As 12-Bar Blues

The early country blues, of course, did not have the form and musical treatment of these later types. As the minstrel men put their stamp on lessons and on the streets, it was inevitable that other more professional entertainers would hear them. When these last what they heard, they published up the tunes. They made them into more finished performances to be used in minstrel shows, vaudeville and, later, in theaters. Thus the 12-bar blues we know today.

A standard 12-bar blues would generally consist of an expression or a thought in the first line, repeated in the second and then expanded in the third and final line. With four bars to the line, each chorus has 12 bars standing . . . you have a 12-bar blues.

Handy had written "Memphis Blues" and levee scenes that would soon be known as the blues, but it was his next much more famous song "Dallas Blues" — recorded in 1912), that was a good example of the 12-bar style.

Trouble, trouble, I've had all my days

Trouble, trouble, I've had in all my days

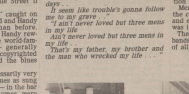
It seem like trouble's gonna follow me all my grave

I ain't never loved but three men in my life

Ain't never loved but three men in my life

That's my father, my brother and the man who wrecked my life . . .

Beale Street Of Yesterday



Beale Street Of Today

'Memphis Slim' Alberta Hunter

For whatever reason, most of these songs were composed in iambic pentameter, heroic couplets, the same form used by Shakespeare in his classics. For many of us oldsters, Memphis is where the real classic Blues began.

Memphis: The Home Of The Blues

Memphis was an ideal site for tield recording, for a thriving blues' economy one could catch the "earthiness" with which Memphis musicians — Will "Big Lucious" Shade, Memphis Minnie, Memphis Slim, Furry Lewis, Alberta Hunter and many variety of "big name" blues singers — would perform. *Memphis or some of the finest juke joints along the legendary Beale Street, in gambling halls and back rooms, swinging up and down the Mississippi River on excursion boats and sometimes for white dances, parties, fish fries, picnics or plantation hoe-downs.*

Memphis was an exciting place for the country black and a city of hope and expectation. And this new music was in everybody's blood!

These were the days of the street bands, jug bands and playing groups of all sizes.

(Continued on Page 10)

Music From The Delta Puts Mississippi On The Map

By Sid P. Graves, Jr.

(Sid Graves is the director of the Carnegie Public Library of Clarksdale and Coahoma County. Miss. Raised in Tunica, he has excelled in his profession and has contributed greatly to the preservation of culture in Clarksdale. His most outstanding area is the establishment of the 1980 Mississippi Library Commission Outstanding Achievement award.)

Put your hands over your ears and get really quiet. Don't listen to anyone or anything else. Hear your heart beat and your blood flow? Keep still for a minute more and maybe what the world would be like without sound and music.

(Continued from Page 9)

Two of the better known and accepted were Jimmy Ashley "Jimmie" and the "Memphis Jug Band." Another was Gus Cannon who lived on Beale Street (Hill, Vol. 9, Frank Stokes.

Other Memphians who made records were Erskine Ross, Memphis Minnie Lil Hardin (later wife of Louis Armstrong), and the one and only Jimmie Rodgers.

Peter Chatman, later to become the world famous **Memphis Slim**, was born also in 1915. He moved to Chicago, then to New York where he was featured on Ed Sullivan's show in 1959.

He went on to Paris, France, where he still lives today. He has been recognized by the French as "America's Good Will Ambassador." Memphis Slim returned to Memphis for a personality, and was the only occasion he was featured with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra.

Europe Loves Beale Street

It is unfortunate that Memphis is better known, loved and recognized for this music all over the world than it is right here at home. Beale Street, shambles now, is truly a mecca for blues lovers on just about every continent in Europe.

A number of our better-known blues entertainers have been featured in European blues festivals. Among them are **Furry Lewis** and **Memphis Minnie**. **Furry** has a part in the upcoming movie, "This is Elvis," which premiers in Memphis in March, 1981. Memphis Ma Rainey appears nearly every night at Silvers Alley in downtown Memphis, wailing the blues.

Alberta Hunter is said to have been the highest paid singer who introduced our blues to Europe. During World War II she made many trips overseas for the USO and entertained General Eisenhower, among many thousands of others. Now 86 years old she is a genuine and authentic reminder of what the early Memphis blues were like.

When Handy composed his "Memphis Blues" (1912) and his "Beale Street Blues" (1916) he put Memphis on the map as a musically minded city. Handy's "St. Louis Blues" (1914) is known around the world. In fact it is the best-known blues ever published. Handy's compositions were soon followed by many civilized language known.

Yet it remained for Memphis' most well-loved writer, Carmella Hill, to put the spotlight to center on Beale Street. It was Daisy Thomas who, on one of his many visits to Memphis, discovered that there was no Beale Street.

Beale, because it ran east and west, was an avenue. Daisy, shocked and saddened by his discovery, went to his hotel room and penned a new song, "Bring Back Beale Street," which is now a collector's item. This moved the mayor to officially make Beale Street of the former Beale Avenue. Daisy's song became history, the city went to work throughout the Memphis called a "street," and the rest, as you see, on Carnella's corners where the name has been freshly painted, the east outline of the word "avenue."

But street or avenue, the songs Handy wrote in Memphis hold fast to something deep within the human heart. Handy is gone now. For this "Beethoven of Beale Street" the evening ann has set forever. But Beale Street still stands, and will continue to stand. . . and in the words of his song, "I'd Rather Be There Than Anywhere Else." Beale Street, Memphis, Beale Street where it is ALWAYS Saturday night. Beale Street . . . where the blues began!

Now think about the sounds you hear (voices, the birds, the wind, the songs and the music.

Who makes the music you like? For millions of people all over the world the favorite music was first made and sung by the black men and women of the Mississippi Delta and of the Midwest.

In fact, most people around the world who know about this part of America do so because of the music (and books) created here over the past 150 years or more. And the importance of that music has grown and flowered many other musicians, including **James Cotton** (from Tunica), **Rose Allison** (from Tippo, in Tallahatchie County) and others.

The music Muddy Waters plays is called "the blues." That is a special kind of music that was created by the experiences and talents of black southerners with roots in the continent of Africa and the fertile land of the Mississippi Delta.

One of Muddy Waters' songs is called "The Blues Had A Baby And They Called It Rock and Roll." Rock and roll is rooted in the Mississippi-born blues.

In 1951, Jackie Brenston of Clarksdale recorded "Rocket 88" with the Turner of Clarksdale and "The Kings of Rhythm" in Memphis.

It was a big hit and made him one the "Rhythm & Blues" charts and influenced a lot of musicians, including **Bill Haley**. Some consider it the first rock-n-roll record, a transition from the music blues of the forties to rock-n-roll.

Muddy Waters himself was influenced by the master of various blues artists including three of the most important figures in early blues music: Charley Patton, Son House and the late Eddie "Son" House, all from the Delta.

Area Produces Music Greats

Some of the most famous names in blues include **W. C. Handy**, "the father of the blues" who lived in Clarksdale and Memphis; **Bessie Smith**, who died in Clarksdale; **B. B. King**, who was born in Sunflower County and spent several years in Montgomery County; **Leontyne Price**, a black opera singer, form Laurel; **William Grant Still**, a black composer from Woodville; Charley Pride, a country singer from Sledge, in Quitman County; **"Sonny Boy" Williamson** (Rice Miller), from Tallahatchie County; **Big Bill Broonzy**, from Scott; **Sir Roliver Lancaster**, **Sam Chatmon** of Hollandale, in Washington County; Roosevelt Sykes, piano artist from Phillips County, Ark.; **Walter "Furry" Lewis**, born in Greenwood, in LeFlore County; **Albert King** of Indianola, in Sunflower County; **Rufus Thomas**, born in Cayce, in Marshall County; **Fred McDowell** of Rossville, Tenn. and a resident of Como, in Tate County; and **Bo Diddley**, whose real name is Everett Tenniston, a southern Arkansan who is a blues singer well know or will learn that some important black..musical artists were born or lived in your home county or community.

A great number of these black artists are much better known and recognized far away from their hometowns. Magazines and books about them are published in Europe and Japan, and people in foreign countries collect their recordings.

Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale

You can discover more about these black artists and enjoy films, video tapes, photographs, displays and records about them and their music by visiting the Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale. Clarksdale is the home of famed bluesmen Charley Patton, W. C. Handy, Robert Johnson, Sam Cooke, John Lee Hooker, Howlin' Wolf and Ike Turner, among numerous others.

You can also discover more about the history of country, jazz and other kinds of music created by southern artists including three of the most important figures in early blues music: Charley Patton, Son House and the late Eddie "Son" House, all from the Delta.

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A 'Race Record' From A Past Era

B. B. King At The Guitar

Memphis' Own Issac Hayes

Black Memphis Music Leads The Way

By Walter Dawson
The Commercial Appeal
The Commercial Appeal

One of the most outstanding features of the black music that has come out of Memphis has been its creativity and originality. Since the post-World War II years, when the blues became rhythm and blues, black music in Memphis has always seemed to make a difference in the direction of the music.

It has never really followed the mainstream of popular music in the country, instead, it has taken its own path. In doing so it has changed the culture, not only of black America, but of the country as a whole.

Elvis Presley, who was born, schooled and made electric guitars pound out the rhythm and blues that were the first to take advantage of these developments.

B. B. King was the first major figure to emerge from the Memphis area in the early 1950s. His distinctive guitar playing became a large influence on the young men and women of the forties of the 60s and 70s. At the same time he is one of the mainstays of the black music that followed him.

King started his recording in the late 40s and quickly became a local favorite. Today he is a big draw on radio show on WDIA. His "3 O'clock Blues" was a No. 1 record on the charts in 1952 and since then, there has been at least one (and usually more) B. B. King record high on the charts every year.

Besides King, there have been a number of other important blues artists who have come out of Memphis. Some of these whose recording vocals were unlike any other singing style of the 50s, got his start on Beale Street. Howlin' Wolf, one of the undoubted legends of the blues, made his first recordings in Memphis and other artists of that era included **Willie Mitten**, **James Cotton**, **Rufus Thomas** as Little Junior's Parker Peter Junior, **Joe Hill Louis**, **Ike Turner** and **Isaac Gerald**.

"Stax Sound" Makes Waves

In the early 60s, another black music scene was building in Memphis. Like the one that spawned B. B. King and Bobby "Blue" Bland, it was a scene that offered a distinctive element to black music nationwide. At the scene's center was Stax Records. Stax got its first big hits from Rufus Thomas and Carla and went on to become one of the great black record labels of the 60s and early 70s.

Memphis' "Stax Sound" was based on a gutsy rhythm punctuated with stirring lead singers that were rivaled only by Detroit's Motown Records as the main black music force.

Stax' biggest artist in the 60s (and today) was that big man who was the undisputed "king of soul." Redding's records sold well and like B. B. King's, they influenced white as well as black artists.

Redding also became one of the first black artists of the 60s to draw out big white audience. In 1967, he was the only black performer to appear at the Monterey Pop Festival. Tragically, few in the crowd seemed familiar with his music, but the show was a huge success. Tragically, his new-found fame was shortlived; he died in a plane crash only months after the festival, leaving a big, if not bottomless, void.

Other Stax artists were William Bell, Rufus Thomas, Sam and Dave, Albert King, **Booker T. and the MG's** and **Isaac Hayes**.

In the late 60s, Stax diversified its music. Isaac Hayes, who had graduated from Hirsch, the company made an album that was a musical departure, especially for the Stax sound, and was a host of other artists. These artists extended Stax's approach to popular music. Unfortunately, the expanded size of the company seemed to be more than it could handle. In the mid-70s, it was forced into bankruptcy.

Hi Records Goes With Mitchell

Another local record company, Hi Records, has had success in the black music in the late '60s.

It got the Willie Mitchell (whose horn-oriented instrumentals had already made a mark by the time) the keys to the studio. They told him to start producing. Mitchell brought a band into the studio, and with them, he began to develop a sound that was quite unlike anything else around. With the Mitchell sound behind them, artist like **Ann** ("I Can't Stop Loving You, Rain") **Peebles**, **Otis Clay** and **Sly Other** artists of that era included **Willie Mitten**, **James Cotton**, **Rufus Thomas** as Little Junior's Parker Peter Junior, **Joe Hill Louis**, **Ike Turner** and **Isaac Gerald**.

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The Staple Singers

Al Green

Otis Redding

Joyce Cobb

Rufus Thomas

Willie Mitchell

LITERATURE / Novelists Reveal Cultural History

By Dr. Juanita Williamson

(Dr. Juanita Williamson is Professor of English (Distinguished Service Professor) at LeMoyne-Owen College. Her articles on linguistics and the teaching of English have been published in many journals. She is the author of one book and the novelist of another, on language. She has received numerous honors recognizing her excellence as an educator.)

There have been a few lower black novelists in the United States but they have been black people, not literary writers, essayists or political writers. This one would expect of the new, reform itself and because of the economic and political environment in which black people have worked and lived.

Only a few novelists had books published during the 1800s and the early 1900s. William Wells Brown, born in 1815, was the first black to publish a novel. His book *Clotel or The President's Daughter*, was therefore, of great historical significance. If like many of the works of blacks, dealt with the black white problem.

Charles Chestnut, born in 1858, deserves the place as writer of fiction. Among his novels are *The Conjure Woman* published in 1899 and *Marrow*. Both are of interest because of historical situations with which they deal.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the number of black novelists increased greatly. Many of these and their works are known to high school students. Even those who have not read the books are acquainted with the titles of many of them.

Among the best known are James Baldwin, who wrote *Go Tell It on the Mountain*; Claude Brown, who wrote *Manchild in the Promised Land*; Ralph Ellison, who wrote *Invisible Man*; Chester Himes, who wrote *If He Hollers Let Him Go*; Richard Wright, who wrote *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*; Ann Petry, who wrote *The Street*; Gordon Parks, who wrote *The Learning Tree*; Margaret Walker, who wrote *Jubilee*, and Richard Wright, who wrote *Native Son*.

Although only one example of each writer's work is mentioned, most of them have written other novels, poems, essays, short stories or all of these.

Many of these writers were born in the South. Several moved away, however, choosing to live elsewhere, often in New York City and other cities in the Northeast.

Writers from Memphis, Mid-South

There have been few published novelists in the Mid-South. Perhaps the earliest of these was Irene Scott Griggs, a Baptist minister. Griggs was born in Texas in 1874. He lived in Nashville for a number of years, and during that time he wrote several novels which set forth his belief in racial equality. The best known of these are *Imperium in Imperio* and *The Hilsman Strand* Both are written in tone, with the oppression of blacks by whites.

Griggs left Nashville and came to Memphis in 1913 to become pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church. After moving to Memphis, Griggs became less militant. Indeed, he no longer fought against things as they were, he accepted to a large degree the status quo.

Griggs's novels have little depth. They are important not for depth of plot or for characterization, but because they indicate something of the feelings of blacks during that period.

Alex Haley

Promotion Piece On 'Roots'

George W. Lee

Richard Wright

Lt. George W. Lee, who is known in Memphis as a businessman and a politician was also a writer. He was born in Mississippi in 1894. As an adult he made his home in Memphis.

Lee seemingly always wanted to write. So after he had become well known in the fields of business and politics, he found time to write two books, *Beale Street: Where The Blue Began* and *River George*.

Beale Street is not strictly a novel. Lee was entranced with Beale Street. He knew its black business and the worth of black persons whose thriving his work. The book details the history of the street, telling much about those who worked there and those who frequented it.

Beale Street holds a rather special place in the history of black writers. It was the first book by a black writer to be advertised by the Book-of-the-Month Club.

Later, Lee took a chapter from *Beale Street* and expanded it into a novel, *River George*. The chief character in the book is Aaron Gedney, a well-educated young man who returns to his people after many years and who works to get the whites to treat the blacks better. George runs into trouble and leaves the area before he is injured. He returns some time later and is lynched. The novel is not a great novel, but it does deal with themes which left a great deal about the period in which it was set.

Richard Wright, however, who has become famous in recent years, is from Henning, Tenn. His book *Black Boy* and *American Hunger* consist of their beginnings in this and other countries. While not strictly a novel, *Black Boy* deserves mention in the literature of black writers from the Mid-South.

Alex Haley visited Memphis a number of times when his stepmother and half-sisters and brothers lived here.

Richard Wright, who was born in 1908 in Mississippi, spent much time in Memphis as a child and later as a young adult. His family moved often during his early years. His first stay in Memphis was quite short. His second time in Memphis covered about two years. Both of these experiences found their way into his novels, because Wright is an autobiographical. Probably he tells more about his Memphis experiences in his book *The Ethical Living of Jim Crow*. Any black person who lived at approximately the same time as Richard Wright did, would know that his description of the situation is factual.

***Jubilee* has been read by thousands of students in this country and in foreign countries. It is a historical novel. The events in that are described actually took place. . . . It gives a far better insight into those days of slavery than does *Gone With The Wind*. It is in truth a classic which tells a true story. . . .**

Richard Wright is a brilliant novelist. His best known novels are *Black Boy* and *Native Son*.

Although Margaret Walker never lived in Memphis, she has so often visited Memphis as a guest of LeMoyne-Owen College, Memphis State University and the city schools that many high school and college students have come to know her well. She has described to them how she came to write her experiences in *Jubilee*, and they have known that she was one with them.

Dr. Walker was born in Alabama in 1915, but grew up in the early years in New Orleans. She spent many years as an English teacher at Jackson State in Jackson, Miss., where she now lives.

Jubilee has been read by thousands of students in this country and in foreign countries. It is a historical novel. The events that are described actually took place, for it tells the story of Dr. Walker's grandmother and her grandmother's family. It is a story of slavery, of bitter times and of the love of people. It grows as Margaret Walker taught into those dark days of slavery then does Gone With The Wind (Part one of that genre.) It is in truth a classic which tells a true story truthfully.

Margaret Walker (seated), author of *Jubilee*, meets with Dr. Juanita Williamson, LeMoyne-Owen professor, author of this article.

RELIGION / Churches Are Preserving History

By Dr. Charles Williams

(Dr. Williams is Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Foundations at Memphis State University. He is currently conducting research in two predominantly black communities in Memphis.)

Black religion can generally be found anywhere a black community exists Although it varies from one denomination to another, there are many similarities.

Religion has always been very important in the lives of black people. This is especially true of black people in the Deep South.

Many acculturations and the American public have assumed that the black church was but a poor, colorful copy of the rural white church and that nothing black had African derivation.

It has been implied that black culture is an illegitimate culture copied from the dominant white culture. Question: Is there a legitimate black culture? Is there a black religion?

There are no schools of thought on this question.

W. E. B. DuBois, a black social scientist, points out in *The Negro Church* that within black religion there is a retention of African cultural traits. This makes it unique to the Negro.

On the other hand, E. Franklin Frazier in his work, *The Negro Church in America*, writes that black religion and the black church grew out of the introduction of Christianity to slaves. Frazier contends that the system of slavery was so highly organized that it was virtually impossible for African customs to survive.

Black Slaves Learn Of Christianity

History reveals that the black church came into being in the South when the slaves were taught Christianity by their masters. However, at the beginning of slavery, many slaves were not taught Christianity.

It was felt that slaves were not human beings, but a lower form of animal beneath the white man. This thinking was based on an interpretation of the Bible that the black man was a direct descendant of Cain who was cursed by God for unforgiveable sin. It was felt that the curse upon the black's skin was marked.

It was also feared that baptism of slaves would make them equal to the whites. If blacks were allowed to become spiritual through baptism, the southern whites feared there would be no defense for them.

The white southerners, it appears, conveyed Christianity to their enslaved slaves. Therefore, many white southerners defended slavery from a religious stance more than from a social or economic one.

However, once laws reflected that slaves did not become free through baptism or through the acceptance of Christianity, the opposition to Christening gradually disappeared.

Historian John Hope Franklin writes that black churches (Baptist) began to spring up during the American Revolution. According to Franklin, the first black church of record was a Baptist Church in Savannah, Ga., founded by a black preacher, Abraham at black man.

Black Religion Grows to Membership

Memphis State Professor Dr. David

Beale Street Baptist Church

Wells Brothers

Tucker in his book, *Black Pastors and Leaders* points out that "by the time blacks moved out to the Tennessee frontier virtually all of the Negroes arriving had been born into the (black) Christian . . . tradition."

It is believed that the first religious services in Memphis were conducted in 1822 by Uncle Harry Lawrence, a slave, who preached to blacks and whites in a brush arbor.

Chester Because of this fact, blacks can be given credit for helping to introduce Christianity to Memphis.

Tucker writes that "in 1831 the Presbyterians reported that they had built a Negro church. By the next year the Methodist Episcopal Church and Baptists were busily building houses of worship with galleries and separate Sunday schools for blacks."

Because records were so poorly kept, it cannot be known for certain which was the first church in Memphis with black membership. However, one of the first was Wesley Chapel (Methodist) established in 1833. Tucker states that, "Within a year it had 18 blacks and 32 whites in their membership." The blacks of Wesley Chapel were actually the only their own separate church in 1859, named Collins Chapel in honor of the first pastor, Rev. J. T. C. Collins

Other early churches were established as missionary churches to blacks in their black slaves. Tucker states that, "Baptist masters were expected to take their slaves to church and revival meetings." There a missionary would preach to them in separate congregations from the whites.

Prominent Minister, S. A. Owen

Efforts were made by blacks and some white supporters to form their own religious bodies. Richard Allen, a Negro, an eccentric white mechanic, and silversmith, is given credit for building a Baptist church in 1837 where blacks could conduct their own religious services. The church was known as the African Church of Townsend's Church.

Chester Tucker points out, it was "not until the Union armies occupied Memphis in 1862 that local blacks found any real freedom of worship."

When the Union army got control of Memphis, it was immediately poured into the city and especially into the black community to help the schools and churches.

Black churches such as Lincoln Chapel, Centenary Chapel and Avery Chapel were established. Avery Chapel was developed through the efforts of H. N. L. Rankin, a black missionary from the Rev. African Bailey a former slave from Mississippi and a Union soldier. built in Beale Street at the corner of Florida and Hernando.

Another Baptist church that came into being at this time was the renowned Beale Street Baptist Church, which was founded by Rev. Morris Henderson. According to Tucker, this church came into being when Rev. Henderson disagreed with some of the white members of the mother church and took a small following with him.

Prominent members of the Rev. Henderson's seal, Beale Street Baptist soon outgrew any of the other black Baptist churches in Memphis and became the leading black church in the city.

As Memphis approached the 1900s, there were at least 12 Baptist churches. Also, the African Episcopal churches continued to be well attended, yet their congregations were smaller than those of the Baptist churches. Several other religious congregations had meager followings of blacks as well.

The black church continued to prosper in the Memphis area through the 20th Century. The majority of blacks remained loyal to the religious congregations which were the first to bring Christianity. Yet some blacks continued to experience religious needs and adjustments were urban life. These needs brought about new churches through non-traditional means in new Christian denominations.

Bishop Charles H. Mason

(Information pertaining to the growth of The Church of God in Christ was provided by the Church Mason Memphis exhibit produced by the Memphis Urban Research Foundation, in cooperation with the Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association.)

Church Of God In Christ Begins

One of the new denominations that came into being was The Church of God in Christ established in 1897 by Charles H. Mason. According to Elmer T. Clark in his book, *The Small Sects in America*, Elder Mason withdrew from the Baptist church in Memphis in 1897 and founded The Church of God in Christ in an old cotton gin in Lexington, Miss.

The denomination emphasized the doctrine of being purified through the sanctification of the heart.

The rural community of Lexington could not produce the seamless per the financial support that the urban environment of Memphis can give. Bishop Mason moved to Memphis to provide the base of the Church of God in Christ

Bishop Mason's dedication and his belief that the church must be founded upon scripture and not his personal theology, have proved to be among the strongest influences in the existence the black South. This is evidenced by the fact that The Church of God in Christ is now one of the largest black denominations in the world, with 5,000 churches in 48 of the 50 states and in other parts of the world.

Given the historical development of the black church, *Bishop Mason maintains, it is apparent that black religion, even though it grew out of the white church and culture, has become a preserver of black culture. Black people have always been the backbone of the cultural survival.*

The black church today is not only involved in saving the people in a spiritual sense, but also in a political and social way.

EDUCATION / School Needs Are Met Gradually

By Frances Coe

(Mrs. Coe worked briefly as a reporter for The Commercial Appeal and as a ninth-grade teacher in the Memphis City Schools. She has been active in civic rights activities and served on the Board of Education for 24 years.)

In 1856, the Memphis city government passed laws forbidding the following:

The teaching of reading to Negroes.

The holding of night meetings by Negroes except by permission and under the supervision of the police.

The hearing of a Negro preacher who presumably would urge Negroes to oppose slavery.

There was also a curfew law which required Negroes to remain in their homes at night.

Education was just for whites.

A charter was obtained from the Legislature in 1848 to set up public schools for whites. This was in response to demands by white blue collar workers who couldn't afford to send their children to private schools. Before 1859 there had been little feeling against blacks. Blacks were mostly high-priced slaves with skills in carpentry and blacksmithing and were not numerous in the cities. In surrounding rural areas, however, blacks were often more than 50 per cent of the population and worried plantation owners.

Schools During Reconstruction

When the Civil War became imminent, Memphis finally got its lot with the South. The city was soon occupied by Federal troops after it fell to the Yankees.

Due to the concern of the Federal Freedman's Bureau, a military order was issued requiring the early 40's education of Colonel John Eaton, who was later to become the first superintendent of Education in the United States. These schools were placed in vacated buildings in nine locations. By 1868, there were 1,200 students in 19 areas with 4 teachers. The school term ran for five months. Classes were held through May.

In the 1860s, there was an influx of blacks into Memphis from surrounding counties. They were seeking protection from former owners and needed help with food and maintenance from the Federal government.

The proportion of blacks in the total Memphis population grew from 25 per cent in 1860 to 38 per cent in 1870 and since then has averaged 40 per cent.

The increased black population was viewed as a threat by the Irish immigrants, who were fearful of the skills of the newly emancipated slaves. Rebuilding their economy, 500 could black schools for about a year.

However, the schools were not free of the private school sector. A strong force in the development of black private schools was the American Missionary Association. They built Lincoln Chapel School and church (1867) and started LeMoyne Normal and Commercial School (1871), named for association leader Dr. Francis LeMoyne. It was later to become Le-Moyne-Owen College.

The Tennessee Baptist Missionary Association founded the Howe Institute (1882).

In 1869, because of a new charter obtained from the state legislature, the schools received local money for the first time. This charter also provided for the free treatment of schools for blacks and whites. This equal treatment, however, did not last long.

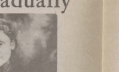
When the first three permanent city buildings were erected in 1873-74, two were for whites and one for blacks, the Clay Street School. There was a big celebration of its opening at the First Separate Colored Street Church.

Dignitaries of both races spoke and led a parade from the old school to the new school.

Though salaries for black and white teachers were equal at first, by 1874 the Board of Education had set up different pay scales. They paid black teachers less on the grounds that their preparation (or educational background) was poor and that they scored lower on examinations given all teachers. This inequity remained until 1946.

Even then, most schools were built in 1889-90, including one for blacks.


Old Clay Street School
Hanks Brothers


Educator Julia Hooks, Also An Early Police Matron

Segregation Persists

In the late 1800s, there was agitation for integrated schools. When they were blocked by whites, blacks then demanded that black schools have black principals and teachers. All power over decisions, however, was vested in the white school board and a white superintendent. And the two school systems remained segregated.

By the end of the 1800s, there were a few private schools for blacks, one less than 1 mile from Julia Hooks, grandmother of Benjamin Hooks, legendary executive director of the NAACP.

Mrs. Hooks was a graduate of Berea College in Kentucky and had been a public school teacher. Many prominent blacks, including Robert Church, Jr., attended her school.

The years 1900 through 1920 were years of tremendous growth in the city and of increasing disparity between the black and white schools. During that time there were nine schools built for blacks all of frame construction, while schools for whites were still built of brick. Portable wooden structures were added to the white schools to keep pace of the rapidly increasing black school population.

Until 1908, there were no black high schools. So the school board took a white school and converted it into a high school, called Kortrecht, housing some 500 students. Later an addition was erected as the Clay Street School and the high school was transferred there. This was the only high school for blacks until Booker T. Washington was opened in 1926.

The curriculum in black schools was comparable to that in white schools, at least on paper. In practice, however, it lacked many courses.

Desegregation Brings Schools

During the Depression a second brick high school for blacks was built


Booker T. Washington High, With Principal Blair T. Hunt
Hanks Brothers


Principal Cora Taylor (right) With Manassas Class
J. Ashton Allen Later Principal

with federal funds when some land including a black county school was annexed to the city. The annexed was Manassas, located on the northwest edge of the city.

Years earlier, black citizens of the community had raised the money to buy the campus. The county had added a stucco building and a brick auditorium, which would accommodate 1,200 people. The stucco building was razed to make way for the new 30-classroom school. Originally, the brick auditorium is still proudly used today.

There were outstanding principals at Manassas over the years, including Dr. A. J. Hayes, and more recently, Dr. Louis Hobson.

From the 1940s until the 1970s, the city's policy of annexing such surrounding areas as Frazier, Whitehaven, Douglas, etc., resulted in a rapidly expanding school system. Several black schools were added.

Annexation Brings Schools

By the early 1950s, it became apparent that "separate, but equal" would not stand up in court.

For the Memphis City Schools the 1950s and 1960s were years of great progress. Some of the most significant steps of desegregation were taken.

We enter the story when the school board composed of three black members, one of whom is chairman (Manire Smith), and a black school superintendent, Dr. Willie Herenton. These changes, along with a decentralized administration, have resulted in black persons occupying many leadership positions participating more in the education of black students.

(Much of the material in this overview is from the dissertation of Dr. David Moss Hilliard at the University of Chicago, entitled "The Development of Public Education in Memphis, Tennessee, 1848-1973 and a Study of Dissertation by Dr. Robert Lee Waller at the University of Western Colorado, entitled "Equality or Inequality, A Comparison of Segregated Public Education in Memphis, Tennessee from 1862 to 1954 and Desegregated Public Education in Memphis, Tennessee from 1962 to 1973." The history of a Ghetto School by Addie D. Jones were also used.)

Integration Sparks Civil Rights, 'White Flight'

By Dr. Hollis Price

(Dr. Hollis Price is president emeritus of LeMoyne-Owen College. Recently he has served as director of urban affairs at WMC-TV. Dr. Price has won many accolades and awards over the years and is the only retired black community. Dr. Walter E. Bailey and Dr. Owen presidents James M. Lawson, Jr., Price's role in Memphis past and present. "He is an unselfish leader in both the educational and civic aspects of the community life of this city.")

The 60s in Memphis was a decade of change, upheaval and discord. Robert Lipsyte, in his book, *One Fan*, said in our history, observed, "Radical historical moments are not static . . . they form equally radical responses."

In 1960 Memphis was the 5th largest school system in the United States. It was a completely segregated system. There seemed to be little genuine interest in the movement. Dr. Benjamin Mays, president of the Board of Education and supervised an educational system which outlawed segregation in public schools.

In 1960, Dr. Mays and the school Board Brown decision stated that desegregation should be carried "with all deliberate speed." Still nothing much changed. As the public schools in the South" during the next five years.

Civil Rights in the 60s

In March, 1960, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund first filed suit against the Memphis Board of Education for not desegregating the Memphis public schools.

By 1961 a few black first-graders were enrolled in formerly all-white schools by the school-board ordered desegregation in all grades. These were only token efforts because there was great opposition to desegregation by the white community.

In 1962 the NAACP sought further relief. They asked that segregation was still in vogue in the public schools.

A black boycott of the schools in 1960 led to the changing of the entire school board, resulting in the election of three black members to the board.

This was an important change in the operation of the school system. Even those who had been denied any effective participation in decisions had a voice in the conduct of school matters.

Integration in the 70s

Still, as late as 1970, the 160 city schools were predominantly attended by one race or the other. Twenty-seven schools had 90 per cent black enrollment and 25 had 90 per cent white enrollment.

In April, 1972, Judge McRae approved a plan for the desegregation of the public schools. This plan received known as Plan A. This plan required the busing of some 14,000 students.

An organization known as Citizens Against Busing (CAB) made its appearance in opposition to the plan. CAB conducted a two-day boycott of the schools, which removed over 30,000 students from their classes.

In the fall of 1972 the Memphis Area Chamber of Commerce took the leadership in organizing IMPACT (Involved Memphis Parents for Action for Children and Teachers). The purpose of this organization was to aid and abet the peaceful desegregation of the schools. Many business leaders and volunteer citizens worked long hours so that there would be no violence when Plan A was implemented. The crucial year in the desegregation of the schools was 1973. It was decided that Plan A was implemented without violence. No bus was stoned and no child was injured.

The police under the leadership of Marion Hedgepeth and Hubbard performed exceptionally well during this transition period. Unfortunately many of our political leaders were of little help, and a few of these were a hindrance.

White Flight Continues

Over the years there had been quite some talked from those early days of. *more obvious and important events has been white flight from the public schools.*

A school system that was 50 per cent white and 50 per cent black in 1960 is now 77 per cent black and 23 per cent white.

As this change has come about there has been a steady loss of tax revenue that funding has been more difficult for the schools. Many have moved to the suburbs where the system to enter segregationist academies.

In their book, *The Schools of Memphis Still, David* Nevin and Robert Bills summarized the effects of the schools which were started for segregationist reasons.

"The schools do achieve some of the purposes for which they were created, but not all, but they also seem

1. To the individual, because despite the schools' claim to the contrary, they do not provide a good general education that appears inadequate for college work.

2. To the public schools, because the schools have not been able to provide a climate that would establish public schools and vitalize the public school system as a community force.

3 To society, because of the damage done to the social fabric and to the tendency of the new private schools to be racially segregated and the narrow view of society that they tend to foster in the new South."

So the positive side many organizations have come to the aid of the public schools from the volunteer sector. The Better Schools Committee and the Memphis Jaycees Task Force take credit for their assistance — to name but a few.

In summation, the Memphis public schools have been slow to meet the needing the needs of our community. Still they have provided a basis for building a good society and a good community for all our citizens.


1911 Third Grade Class At Old LeMoyne School
Hanks Brothers


Dr. Hollis Price

Blacks And Higher Education In Memphis

By Dr. Hollis Price

Over a long period LeMoyne College and later Owen College were the only institutions hereabouts which were open to Negro students.

Memphis State under the leadership of Dr. Rudolph Lambuth, resisted the movement of black students as long as possible. When I pointed this out, Smith *stated that my observations were "ill-informed, unfair, unprofessional and further evidence that we are not ready for desegregation."*

LeMoyne was founded and supported by a predominantly white church (United Church of Christ). Owen College was founded and supported by a black denomination (Tennessee Baptists). In 1968 they merged to form LeMoyne-Owen College.

The merger had the effect of creating one stronger institution, which was able to serve its students more effectively than either of its predecessors could do alone.

Presently the college is under the capable leadership of Dr. Walter Wallace, Lemoyne-Owen College continues to make a contribution to the educational life of our community.

(Editor's Note: LeMoyne Owen (and earlier, LeMoyne College) graduates included Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the NAACP; Marion Barry, mayor of Washington; actress Ja'W Harenton; Memphis school superintendent Jesse Turner, Memphis banker and county Board of Commissioners member, Dr. Vasco Smith, dentist and county Board of Commissioners member; Lawrence Wade, Memphis Housing Authority executive director, and many other leaders.)


Students Observe Buried Bus


Mayor Chandler Meets The Public


Picketeers Take On City Hall


Integrated Schools Now A Reality

SPORTS / Local Black Athletes Reach Heights

By Sports Department,
The Commercial Appeal

Larry Finch, Claude Humphrey, Ronnie Robinson, Verdell Mathis, Bobby "Bingo" Smith, Oscar Reed, Elmer Henderson, Charles 'Bee' Spearman, Charlie "Razor's" Edge, John Johnson.

As far back as you care to remember, outstanding black athletes have provided Memphis with the winning edge in athletic competition. They have been in the forefront of almost every major sports breakthrough by Memphians in the 20th century.

MSU Athletes Scale Heights

Finch and Robinson, two Melrose High School products, hold a special place in Memphis' sports history. They scaled the athletic heights at dramatically as any black Memphians. It was their skill and determination that almost brought the Tigers and coach Gene Bartow a national basketball title in 1973.

Only a phenomenal game by UCLA's Bill Walton prevented the Tigers from owning home from The Astrodome in St Louis with the big NCAA trophy.

Art Gilliam, owner of WLOK, yet the contributions of Finch and Robinson best in his days as an editorial writer for The Commercial Appeal: "Larry Finch and Ronnie Robinson, two players from Orange Mound, deserve special recognition. First, they are pro-

'When I watched them play I felt very proud, but I also felt a trace of sadness. It was for the Finches and Robinsons who never had a chance because of the lack of Bartows.'

ducts of Memphis, but more than that they are fine men. Their influence on the team in terms of recruiting players, leading them, and holding them together in the tough going was enormous.

"When I watched them play I felt very proud, but I also felt a trace of sadness. It was for the Finches and Robinsons who never had a chance because of the lack of Bartows. It was for the unknown All-Americans who shot their hoops on gravity streets and were never admitted to Memphis State. It was for a city that has had champions for decades who played on tar covered on back alleys rather than in a coliseum or field house."

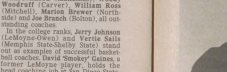
Memphis State undoubtedly opened the door for black athletes to compete on the major college level in basketball and football. Among basketball all-Americans at MSU, in addition to Finch and Robinson, were Larry Bowen, Dexter Reed, Marion Hilliard and James Bradley. Finch holds the all-time MSU scoring record with 1,969 points in three years. Dexter Reed is second with 1,878 points in two and four years. Other 1,000-point scorers include Hilliard, Bradley, Robinson and James Douglas.

Memphis Coaching Greats

The list of distinguished black Memphis coaches is long. Among them are John Johnson (Manassas), Woody Woodruff (Carver), William Ross (Mitchell), Marion Brewer (Northside) and Joe Branch (Bolton), all outstanding assistant coach on the

On the college ranks, Jerry Johnson (a graduate of Hall High, Vertie Sails (Memphis State), Jerry Slater (Memphis State) and Verdell Mathis (Memphis State) have been head coaches. Jerry Johnson was a former LeMoyne player, holds a head coaching job at San Diego State.

(Continued on Page 17)



Coach Gene Bartow congratulates Memphis State players Larry Finch and Larry Kenon after a NCAA semi-final round win over Providence.

Yellowjackets Pick Up Nickname 'Magicians'

Not too many Memphians probably remember the football exploits of Charles "Razor's Edge" and Charles "Bee" Spearman, among others, when a kid left end on offense and defense who went the whole 60 minutes of a football game both ways. He earned black college all-America honors in 1936 for the LeMoyne Yellowjackets.

It was in 1936 that LeMoyne dropped the "Yellowjackets" as a nickname and picked up "Magicians." That was because nobody could tell where the ball was in our backfield," Henderson, an all-American tackle, recalled.

LeMoyne has a history of outstanding basketball players such as Charlie "Razor's" Edge, a 6-5 forward who led the nation in rebounding in the late 30s. In 1976 LeMoyne was host to a national championship by Clint Jackson, Robert Newman and Willie Parr.

Memphis Red Sox Thrilled Fans

No overview of black participation in Memphis athletics would be complete without a mention of the Memphis Red Sox, who thrilled thousands of fans from 1923-1951. As members of the American League in the Negro Major League, they once drew 11,000 to Russwood Park for an Easter Sunday game in 1944.

Long before Jackie Robinson broke the color line in white major league baseball, Verdell 'Lefty' Mathis and several others were playing major-league ball for the Red Sox. Even Charley Pride, who made a big league splash in the recording business, once earned a Memphis uniform.

The Red Sox were put together in 1923 by Solomon Hall, D. W.S. Martin and backed by R. R. Moton, who kept the team in the Negro Major League until it broke up in 1951. The league eventually folded as a large number of the best black players moved into the white major leagues.

Perhaps the best Red Sox player of all was Mathis. He was a "Sunday pitcher," so named because that was the day most of the fans showed up in three all-star games at Chicago's Comiskey Park, he didn't allow a run.

Dr. W. S. Martin, Owner Of The Memphis Red Sox, His Brother, Dr. J. B. Martin, President Of The Negro American League (seated), With Dr. Anderson Ross And Ted Raspberry

'Razor's' Edge (center) And Willie Parr (right)

Verdell Mathis

Athletes Become Heroes; MSU Goes To NCAA Finals

By Bobby Hall
Sports Department,
The Commercial Appeal

The name is a magic word in Memphis sports history. It's Finch.

Sports fans know him as the all-time leading scorer in Tiger history and currently as an assistant coach on the staff of MSU coach Dana Kirk.

But above all, Finch is a believer in Memphis, his home and a city for which he feels a special kinship.

"Don't go saying bad things about Memphis around me," Finch said. "I get on numerous occasions when some negative aspect of the city is mentioned. "I don't want to hear anything like that. This is my home and I'm proud of it.

"There's no special about Memphis to Finch.

"I like Memphis because it has been good to me," Finch once said. "You take someone who knows arrow is shot like the players jumping from place to place. I've been lucky. I'm in a city where they're getting something for nothing and they don't get any pleasure from it. I get a lot of recognition, but then I get a lot of pleasure out of things that don't give me any recognition.

Like identifying with kids in underprivileged areas. As a folk hero, he gets letters come to him for advice and direction and he takes time to share their problems.

"When I finished playing at Memphis State, I thought about moving but I entered my whole Finch outlook. I've always been close to the Memphis State program and any time I had a chance of coming in and watching them play, I always would. Because I because I've always felt a part of the school.

"Once you give a place all you've got and leave, you still feel you're a part of it. I feel the same way about Melrose, and I feel the same way to a certain extent about Messick and Richland." (Finch played at Hall, Jr. High and Messick High School.)

After an outstanding prep career at Melrose, Finch was a sellout magnet for many schools. But he chose Memphis State even though the Tiger program was struggling at the time. The Memphis loyalty had a lot to do with it.

"When I came here as a player, things were in bad shape," Finch said. "We weren't winning many games. I wanted to be a part of building something that's great. I didn't want to be another bump on a log someplace."

Among the records he still holds at MSU are most points scored in two seasons (1,390), most points in a single season (721), most points scored in a game (40) and most consecutive double figure games (33). He was an All-Missouri Valley Conference selection twice and received All-America mention by several selection groups as a junior and senior.

During his three seasons with the MSU varsity, the Tigers were 18-8, 21-7 and 24-6. He helped put the Tigers in two postseason tournaments: the National invitation Tournament in 1971 and the finals of the NCAA playoffs in 1973 with help from former Melrose teammate Ronnie Robinson and Larry Kenon.

He grew up loving sports and the opportunities presented by competition.

"My father had been dead a long time," Finch said. "I worked hard for what we had," said Finch, who grew up with seven younger brothers and sisters. "I decided if I was going to school, the only way was basketball. I used to go out on the *playground and play and play. We would get up early, about 4 o'clock, before the sun got hot, and we would play 'til mid-day. We'd come back about 3 o'clock and play sometimes until midnight."*

The hard work paid off for Finch but he'll never forget his background.

On a recent trip to New Orleans where the Tigers played Tulane, Finch was approached by several fans who wanted to know how to get the huge Louisiana Superdome. They were asking for tickets . . . anything to get them inside to see the game.

"Twenty years ago I was one of those little fellows," Finch recalled. "I never had a ticket either, and nobody knows now badly I wanted to get inside. I know how they feel."

Larry Finch Assists A Young Fan

(Continued from Page 16)

High School Athletics Strong

High school football traditions is strong in the black community. Before 1967 when the Memphis Negro League and the Memphis Prep League formed the Memphis Interscholastic Athletic Association, the Negro League — also called the Bluff City Conference — had champions from four high schools.

Booker T. Washington and Manassas high schools dominated the Negro League from 1938-1945. Powerful teams also came out of Hamilton, Father Bertrand and, later, Melrose.

In high school basketball, the top stars of the 1970s dominate the early Larry Spicer of North Side, the late John Ginn of Melrose, Michael Wilson of Manassas, Alvin Wright of Melrose, James Hagler of Melrose, Ella Aldridge of Hamilton, Ed Wilson of Manassas, Chris Barret of Mitchell, Robert Newman of Hamilton, James Campbell of Hamilton, Clint Jackson of Hamilton, Carl Walton of South Side, Keith Hilliard of Douglass and Michael Brooks of Melrose were the cream of an outstanding crop.

Athletes Make It In The Pros

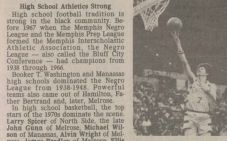
Most prominent recently among black Memphians to have gone on to pro football is Philadelphia Eagle defensive end Claude Humphrey, former Lester standout. Elsie Lee, also a former Memphis Lester product, was a standout linebacker with the Los Angeles 49ers. Oscar Reed, a Booker T. Washington graduate, played at Colorado State and with the Minnesota Vikings.

Bobby 'Bingo' Smith

Bobby 'Bingo' Smith led Melrose and later Tulsa to renown as a scoring machine. He played professional football with the Cleveland Cavaliers and later had a brief fling with baseball. He was also with the Memphis Tams while playing professional basketball for the Ben Globetrotters. Rick Roberson of Mitchell played with the Cincinnati Royals.

Major league baseball has Memphis born Bill Madlock at third base for the Chicago Cubs. Pirates and Lynn Herndon, former Douglass standout, is a outfielder with the San Francisco Giants.

Jimmy Tate, former heavyweight champion of the world, made his introduction to boxing in Memphis.



Philadelphia Eagles' head coach, Dick Vermeil, is carried off the field by his players including defensive end Claude Humphrey (87), as the Eagles beat the Vikings 31-16 to win their recent NFC semi-final playoff game.

BUSINESS / Leaders Provide A Mix Of Talent

By Ron Walter

Ron Walter is a fourth generation Memphian and a professor of the Memphis City Schools. He has conducted programs and edited paper dealing with the early black settlers in Memphis. In 1977, Walter received a congressional appointment to serve on the staff of Congressional Harold Ford. He is presently assistant to President Dave Hennen of Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division.

Black men have been an integral part of Memphis' heritage for well over a century. To overlook this fact is to deny all of us the rich, diverse and compelling romance we have commonly shared.

If we examine Memphis' history from the post Civil War era to the early 1900's, we see many examples of Black Memphians excelling, building, financing, buying and selling goods and services in the Memphis marketplace.

Fortunately, a black scholar thought to record narratives about the lives and accomplishments of many of these persons. His book, *The Bright Side of Memphis*, published in 1908, was written by "Professor" G. P. Hamilton, Memphis' most educationally with black Memphians, their work and their deeds.

G.P. Hamilton

Pioneer Educator Remembered

Born in Memphis in 1867, G. P. Hamilton began and served as principal of Booker T. Washington High School from the time it opened its doors until 1921, the year of his death.

By 1932, Hamilton had accomplished much to inspire and build education for blacks in the Memphis community.

Hamilton High School is named in his honor.

First Millionaire A Memphian

Perhaps the best known person written about in Hamilton's book is **Robert R. Church, Sr.**, who was known as the "South's first black millionaire."

Church was an accomplished businessman and a most esteemed civic leader. He began his career as a steamboat roustabout and ended it as a giant in real estate. He owned and operated a "First class" saloon on Beale Street, lived in a rambling three-story Queen Anne-style mansion on Lauderdale Street. At that time, this area was an integrated neighborhood for people of considerable means.

R. R. Church, Sr.

In 1906, Church founded the Solvent Savings Bank and Trust Company, the first black bank in Memphis.

Because blacks were excluded from public parks and municipal auditoriums during this period, Church built a luxurious park and auditorium for blacks on Beale Street called Church's Park and Auditorium. Hamilton's Note: This facility will be reconstructed as part of the ongoing Beale Street project.

Church's growing financial empire led him to be one of the most philanthropic citizens in Memphis during the late 1890s and well into the early 20th Century. He bought a fine and petrified wagon for the city, donated generously to orphanages and even contributed $1,000 to help underwrite an annual reunion of Confederate veterans. Also generous with his time and talents, Church was the first black on the Memphis school board of education.

The charitable contribution for which he is best known came after the Yellow Fever Epidemic in 1878 and 1879, which killed 4,27? white citizens and caused many other thousands to flee the city. Memphis became laden with debt and lost its city charter.

To restore Memphis' financial solvency, heavy taxes were levied and implemented. Church was the first citizen to publicly post a bond at the price of $1,000. Church's action caused thousands of other white citizens to follow suit. Shortly thereafter, Memphis' charter was restored.

Church's generosity to Memphis and Church gave Memphis that necessary financial push it forward to the greatness it is today.

Church Is Republican Giant

Robert R. Church, Jr., a man who would rise to great heights, particularly in political circles, was born in 1885.

In 1916 Church, founded the Lincoln Republican League, an organization of black Republicans dedicated to national attention. The League sought "to restore the party to its former glory." Some sources feel that the present-day trend of the "black voting Blocks" was conceived and put forth in the Lincoln League philosophy.

Church became one of the Republican party's patronage officials, thus assuming a key role when blacks and a few whites met to divide the spoils of victory and to plan strategy. In addition, he was Washington, D.C., around 1940, after having moved there from Memphis.

Church was a lawyer and banker who was both and the Democrat party. Church controlled Shelby County at the time.

When Church died in 1952, Ray Wilkins, (who later became executive secretary of the NAACP) said, "Robert R. Church was one of the giants among Negroes in the Republican Party." Stories are still being told of how big Republican leaders . . . offered him fat expense accounts. . . . To all these Church turned a deaf ear."

Church was independently wealthy, having inherited close to a million dollars from his businessman father's estate. At his death, he was a man of national prominence.

Anti-Lynching Crusader Flees

A Memphis woman who achieved international prominence was **Ida B. Wells**, described as a "militant and active crusader." Miss Wells-Barnett Wells published and edited a black weekly newspaper in 1892 called the *Memphis Free Speech*, in which she wrote editorials denouncing lynchings.

It was said that had not Miss Wells been away in New York at the time, she would have been taken to Court Square, tied to a tree and whipped to death. Miss Wells was the reputed instrument for exposing lynchings in that city.

While in New York, however, Miss Wells received the support of the publisher of the New York *Age* and in 1892 and 1894 was invited to London, England. There she was received with excited and pleased support for her brand against race lynchings in the United States.

William Henry Foote

Everything He Built, Thrived

Important not only blueprint religious heritage but also to its business and civic heritage was the Joseph E. Walker. In describing Dr. Walker, Fred Hutchison commented, "He was a physician he built a practice; as a businessman he built a bank; as a capitalist he built an insurance company; and as a citizen he built a church; and all he has ever built is still built and still thriving."

In 1891, 22 years after his death, the Joseph E. Walker Co. was actively alive. Overcoming a background of being another grandson of the negro, Dr. Walker rose to become one of the "richest of his race."

Walker was born in the cotton fields of Mississippi. While in the white household through college and medical school and was educated by his white owners.

In 1917 he was elected president of the Delta Penny Savings Bank and in 1917 was elected president of Mississippi Life Insurance Co.

Persuaded by his friend, Lt. George W. Lee, to move to the larger city, Walker moved to Memphis, where he founded Universal Life Insurance Company in 1923 and the Tri-State Bank of Memphis in December of 1946.

Active in politics, Dr. Walker was reported to be a "powerful Republican during his early years, but while in Memphis was known only as an active and influential Democrat."

Dr. Joseph Walker helped finance the 50th Memphis Walker Homes Subdivision, which bears his name.

(Continued on Page 19)

J. E. Walker Organizes Negro Business League

(Continued from Page 18)

Reported to be a millionaire, Dr. Walker organized the Negro Chamber of Commerce in 1926 and was elected president of the National Negro Insurance Association that same year.

T. O. Fuller

Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Walker

In 1939 he was elected president of the National Negro Business League and in 1935 was listed by *Jet Magazine* as one of the 10 most influential Negroes in America.

While in New York, however, Miss Wells received the support of the publisher of the New York *Age* and in 1892 and 1894 was invited to London, England. There she was received with excited and pleased support for her brand against race lynchings in the United States.

Head Waiter Becomes Legend

There's no telling how many thousands of dollars Dr. Walker's head waiter scooped up the cover of Atlanta's Locke Elementary School on St. Paul, without knowledge or interest of another Memphis black, Alonzo Locke.

Locke was the head waiter of the Peabody Hotel and many felt Locke made the Peabody. While that statement probably cannot be proven, it can be said that Locke built a college for waiters right in the Peabody Hotel.

Locke organized the hotel workers into logical departments, appointing a department head to each group. He would be present at the first meeting to help do the job. There was a head of private room service, head of parties, etc., and each head conducted departmental meetings in the college-designed hall.

When the Peabody reopens this year, it will open with Alonzo's influence firmly "locked" in.

(Many sources have been used to compile this article. We would like to thank the staff of Memphis Shelby County Public Library and Information Center, History Department, Memphis State University, and their resources. Clippings from the *Scimitar*, Times, *Commercial Appeal*, the *Memphis Press-Scimitar*, the *Tri-State Defender*, and the *Memphis World* were most valuable. Also materials from the book entitled *The Negro Chamber of Commerce* (1941), by Walter Chivers Weare, Publishing A Master Walker and Blair T. Hunt and a brochure entitled, "Memphis Historical Perspectives in Black" were used. Of course, credit is due to Annette and Roberta Church's book, *The Robert R. Churches of Memphis* and G. P. Hamilton's book, *The Bright Side of Memphis* and *The Beacon Lights of the Race*. From the book, *Who's Who Negro pened to Memphis* was most valuable. Material was also used from the Tennessee Historical Society Papers".)

Blacks Contribute To Community

Old Days At Universal Life Insurance Company

By Fred L. Davis

(Fred Davis is former member of the Memphis City Council and a director of the Memphis Area Chamber of Commerce. He established the first minority-owned insurance agency in Tenn., Ark., Miss. and Ala. when he signed an agency contract with The Hartford Insurance Company.)

Business and commerce are the lifeblood of any community. When the vital elements cease to be strong, the community becomes sick when they cease to exist, the community dies.

Memphis is over 400 years old. It has in excess of 259,000 blacks. Although the black community constitutes over 40 per cent of the population, the business sector accounts for less than one per cent of the economic base.

Each week we read or watch on television only three black-owned businesses with assets of $1 million dollars or more: Universal Life Insurance Company with assets growing at a rapid rate out of Universal - Tri-State Bank and Supreme Life Insurance Company. It is hoped that there will be a dramatic improvement in black statistics in the decade of the 80's.

It is very instructive to review the history of each decade on the community businessman. During the 50s major battles were fought and won for the right to equal educational opportunities. The 60s will be recorded when many black Americans sought to put to use their training and skills gained by receiving as a result of the victories of the 50s.

This progress, however, did not bring about the black economic base. Many black businessmen were forced to enter previously closed doors in the established economic structure, not to develop their own businesses. It is possible that the 70s will be recorded as a less active decade in the black community as economically decreased rather than increased.

When the vital elements cease to be strong, the community becomes sick

• • •

It was during the latter part of the 60s that Universal Life Insurance Co. (an affiliate office to the National Insurance Company founded by Dr. Benjamin Booker T. Washington). This company was founded in the early 20s and an aid to the growth of minority businesses.

Universal Life Insurance Co. was also during this period was the building of Metro Shopping Center. This was made possible with the support of a number of established business leaders, many of whom were urged on by then mayor Henry Loeb.

As an outgrowth of the National Insurance League, the Construction Contractors Assistance Corporation was established to assist minorities in their development. This organization has made a commendable value to the small contractor.

Early Photograph Of Klondike Community Grocery Store

The 70s were a decade during which the black entrepreneurial spirit flourished the most. Despite this activity the increase in the number of businesses at the end of the decade was slight because most small businesses ever before reached five-years-old. It is hard to find a minority business which is more than five and has been ten-years-old. If they make it five they will be lucky.

Over 90 per cent of black business is either of the retail or the service type. The black business sector is composed primarily of small beauty parlor and beauty shops, small cleaners and a number of other personal-oriented services.

The following are a few of the "survivors":

Retail Groceries

Rufus Jones who comes from a family of grocers, opened Jones Big Star Supermarket on Lamar Avenue. Jones Chism family owns and operates three retail grocery outlets, two supermarkets and one convenience store.

K. L. Young owns and operates a supermarket under the Hogue & Knott franchise.

Construction:

Bricks, Inc, is a construction company founded and owned by Owen brothers. The company has won many building awards and has a reputation for performance.

Harwell and Sanders Construction Co. has captured attention both as a primary and sub-contractor.

Fast Food:

Charles Haser was awarded a Burger King franchise and has expanded his operation to three fast food outlets.

Retail Tires:

Rufus Myers opened Myers Tire Store in 1966. He left early in a black into this business. The business has survived and is a going concern.

Advertising:

Larry Shaw, who formerly handled the advertising and public relations for Stax Records, opened an advertising agency in the Shaw Word Group. They serve both local and national clients.

Radio:

Art Gilliam purchased and now successfully operates radio station WLOK.

Banking:

Tri-State Bank built its new main office at Main and Beale and added two branch banks. Its operation has moved through the years.

Roofing:

A. Jones Roofing Company has been in business for many years. Quality, government agencies and the public.

POLITICS / Church Family Is Active, Involved

By Pamela Palmer

(Pamela Palmer is an associate professor at Memphis State University. She is head of the Mississippi Valley Collection, Among her publications is The History of Church Family of Memphis.)

Between 1880 and 1950, black Memphians' political opportunities varied greatly. Blacks were guided by case file leaders who had high ambitions for their race and their victories and achievements were hard-fought. Disappointments, however, were interspersed with times when blacks held little political power.

The contributions of two Memphians cannot be exaggerated. Robert Reed Church, Sr. and Robert Reed Church, Jr. led the movement toward political equality in many ways.

On a statewide basis, only one black was elected a member of the legislature before 1880. He was Benjamin W. Keeble of Davidson County, elected in 1872.

Memphis in 1880 had reached its lowest point in the city's history. During the previous decade, it had suffered several epidemics and repeated attacks of yellow fever. By 1879 Memphians recognized that the city could not continue to function under heavy debt.

That year, racked by disease and debt, Memphis gave up its charter and became a taxing district of the state. The period of despair, political spoils by blacks were difficult and the people of Memphis/Shelby County were on sheer survival.

Church Plays Role in Politics

Robert Reed Church, Sr., a wealthy black businessman, helped begin the efforts to regain the city's charter. Born in 1839 he was the son of a white owner of several steamboats and of an educated slave of Malay descent. In addition to being an astute businessman and supporter of the city, he was a staunch Republican and worker for black equality.

In the late 1870's and early 1880's, many Memphians lost faith in their city as a healthy and financially stable location. Not long after Robert Church, Sr. His daughter, **Mary Church Terrell**, wrote of her father's belief in the city in her book *A Colored Woman in a White World*.

"The reason Memphis has epidemics of yellow fever periodically is because the streets are in terrible condition. There are big mudholes filled with great pools of stagnant water, breeding disease. When Memphis is cleaned up, there won't be any yellow fever and it will be one of the most healthful and desirable cities in the country."

During the 1880s, blacks served in several elected offices in Memphis and Shelby County. **Fred E. Hunt** served as Shelby County register between 1880 and 1885. Green E. Evans was elected to the county court in 1879 and a number of black men from Shelby County were elected members of the Tennessee State Legislature.

Robert Church, Sr. made his only bid for political office in 1882, when he ran for a seat on the Memphis Board of Public Works. Though he lost his bid for election, this race strengthened his political influence.

By 1890 the number of blacks in public office in Memphis declined (like in other parts of the South). In Memphis/Shelby County, the *Tennessee Politician* lists several reasons for the decline; they were:

(1) Corruption at the polls

(2) The Removal of Federal troops

(3) Apathy by many blacks.

Section 4 of the newly ir. created poll tax, instituted in 1890, had a disastrous effect on the black and poor blacks, even though it was just $1.

By 1900 Memphis was the center of financial and health woes of the earlier days. Its population had passed the 100,000 mark. It was the third largest Southern city.

Included in these figures was a 60 per cent increase in the black population in the last decade. The greater number of potential black voters would contribute significantly to Memphis' black political voice.

In 1900 Robert Church, Sr., experienced a millionaire, was elected as one of two state electoral delegates-at-large to the Republican Convention. Although this was his last political appointment, Church, Sr. was not finished. He turned to other efforts which aided blacks and was most supportive of his son's political activities.

Son Expands Father's Efforts

Robert Church, Jr., began life with many advantages that his father had originally lacked. He attended Oberlin College and then began his career in Business in New York. An interest in politics was aroused by the younger Church, who returned to Memphis and the family-established Savings Bank.

Dedicated to the Republican party, he followed and expanded the efforts of his father. He was named a delegate to eight national Republican conventions from 1912 to 1928.

The extent of his influence is best seen in the appointments he made to office and diplomatic positions. Not Robert Church, Jr. but **Dr. Robert R. Church, Jr.** Founder of Memphis' The Church of Memphis, Inc. That in 1921 a new postmaster for Memphis was appointed. When a candidate other than Church's received the nomination, Church spoke directly to the Postmaster General, who rejected the nominee, and worked for Church's candidate to gain his post.

NAACP Chapter Founded

Church was instrumental in the founding of the Memphis Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which was chartered in 1917. Church served many years as a member of the NAACP National Board of Directors.

During this Robert Church, Jr., helped to organize the Beale Street Baptist Church and return to Memphis. Lee, promoted to Major General for bravery on the battlefield, became Church's assistant and a dynamic leader in local and national politics.

Crump Comes to Power

While the Republican Party lost the presidential election of 1932, Lee continued his work on the local level and with Church supported the Crump political force as a way toward black gains. The hoped-for achievements were not forthcoming, but blacks continued to show the power of their vote. Black support for Crump was a major factor in his victories.

Lee continued to work with the Crump organization after Church lost his local power in the late 1930's. At the beginning of the decade, historians have noted that the large number of black voters made Memphis unique among Southern cities of that time. They attribute this to the relatively large black middle class and to Robert Church, Jr., whose Lincoln League is credited with registering over 10,000 black voters.

Black leadership lost ground with Crump, the "boss" of the city, in power.

This situation was not challenged until late 1940s. In 1948 Dr. E.E. Walker, Robert Church's successor as head of the Church family, unsuccessfully ran against Crump's wishes. Dr. Walker's son, **A.W. Willis**, was later elected to the U.S. House although Rehaver (who won the election) did not receive a majority in Memphis the large number voting for him was great enough to give him Crump's control was fading.

Politics in new era was beginning for Memphis.

(The author expresses her gratitude to Miss Roberta Church of Washington, D.C. Miss Church is the daughter of Robert Reed Church, Jr. It is with her permission that material in the Church Family Papers in the Mississippi State University Libraries Special Collections was used.)

Robert Church, Jr.

Robert Church, Jr. (left) with Robert R. Church of Memphis

Mississippi Valley Collection

1919 Republican National Convention
(Robert Church, Jr. second from left)

Mississippi Valley Collection

Old Church Park And Auditorium On Beale Street

Marchers, Strife Give Mississippi Growing Pains

By Dr. Roy Hudson

(Dr. Roy Hudson has taught English at Meridian Jr. College and has directed student teaching at Mississippi Valley State University. Currently Dr. Hudson is writing a book concerning the Mississippi Valley State University. He is a writer and lecturer in Communications Sociolinguistics, Folklore and historical trends of Mississippi and the South.)

The decade of the 60s ranks as one of the most socially dynamic periods in the history of the United States. Mention the names of **John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Wallace** to those who lived through it and you name enough to know the public figures of the 60s and you may be likely to evoke strong emotions.

In most eras of history of historical significance, however, the central factor has been conflict. So it was with Mississippi and the nation during the 60s. Regardless of the cause, the central conflict was drawn almost entirely along racial lines.

To gain an understanding of the major events that shaped the decade of the 60s, one must begin with the 50s for it was during that period that the seeds of conflict were planted.

Mississippi's role in the Montgomery bus boycott was brief but by **Martin Luther King** in 1955, the excitement of black students in the allwhite Little Rock Central High school in 1957, and the sit-ins of Greensboro, N.C. and Nashville, Tenn. a fourteen year old black youth named **Emmett Till** from Chicago was soon added to the list of the seething pot of racial conflict that would boil over into the 60s.

Barnett vs. Kennedy in the 60s

The election of **Ross Barnett** as Governor of Mississippi in 1960 and the election of John F. Kennedy as President of the United States in 1960 set the stage. It cast two of the central characters in the drama in key plays roles.

Ross Barnett was elected governor by a mostly white electorate after campaigning on the issue that blacks had been common stock for white politicians and that Barnett would resist racial segregation and stamp it out.

To Mississippi's credit, the election of John F. Kennedy as a result of a new era in black politics would become sensitive to that problem.

These two politically opposite individuals, Barnett and Kennedy, would find themselves on opposite ends of a hotly emotional issue some two years later.

In the period between 1960 and 1962, Mississippi and the rest of the south became the focal point of black social activism. At the beginning of the movement, much emphasis was placed on blacks exercising their rights to public facilities. Mississippi blacks began to participate in sit-ins, freedom rides and mass political meetings.

Violent confrontations often erupted. One of the most violent occurred around a very emotional issue in Mississippi at the time, school desegregation.

In the fall of 1962, word was out that James Meredith, a black was going to try to become the first black to enroll at the University of Mississippi. White reaction was swift and violent. Sworn to uphold the constitutional laws of the state, Governor Barnett stood in opposition to what most white Mississippians considered a threat to their way of life.

Since Meredith's enrollment at Ole Miss had been ordered by the federal courts, President Kennedy and Attorney General **Robert Kennedy** threw the power of the federal government behind Meredith's efforts. The result had been the use of federal troops and after violent riots which left two people dead, and Meredith safely enrolled, the smoldering tide of black freedom advanced.

Blacks Expand Goals

Through the middle 60s political and racial conflict continued to dominate the Mississippi scene. In the summer of 1963, Paul B. Johnson campaigned for governor with the claim that as lieutenant governor he had "stood up for Mississippi" at Ole Miss.

Johnson and all other white candidates openly directed their campaigns toward the white voters and they were successful. Johnson's political campaign helped fuel the fires of racial conflict that characterized Mississippi's political climate in the 60s. Activists such as **Medgar Evers**, NAACP field secretary and civil rights leader, was ambushed and gunned down by Byron de la Beckwith (white), who was later acquitted.

The death of President Kennedy in the fall of 1963 brought shades of uncertainty to Mississippi and the nation. However, **Lyndon Johnson** continued to carry out policies of social change as Kennedy had done. And Johnson, with the support of the United States in 1964, Mississippi was carried by **Senator Barry Goldwater**, the conservative Republican candidate.

Violence continued to burst forth as blacks made strides in public facilities and began to push in other areas, such as school desegregation and voter registration. The murder of three civil rights workers, a white and two in Philadelphia, Miss. during the summer of 1964 was a tragic result of this progress.

Also in 1964, the Civil Rights Bill was passed by the U.S. Congress over strong opposition from southern congressmen. In 1965 the Voting Rights Act passed.

Mixed among the more familiar voices of **Martin Luther King, Roy Wilkins**, and Mississippians **Aaron Henry** and **Fannie Lou Hamer**, the new voices of Stokley Carmichael and

Medgar Evers

Fannie Lou Hamer

Stokley Carmichael

Freedom Marchers Plod Through Rain Moving On To Jackson, Miss.

A Deputy Sheriff Shoves Meredith Marcher As Group Attempts To Cross LeFlore County (Miss.) Courthouse Lawn

Through the small cities and towns of north Mississippi, the marchers moved steadily and relentlessly picking up followers as it went. It encountered hostile opposition from law enforcement officials and the white public. Although it started as a freedom's demonstration against fear, the march took on greater significance.

In spite of the differences among the leaders, the movement found the more aggressive Stokely Carmichael, the marchers' continuation toward Jackson. It might possibly be that the pivotal point of the movement came when the national news media flashed the picture of Carmichael on the air. When Stokely Carmichael was shouting "Black Power" from a torch-lighted field calling out of Etta Bena, in Jackson, they held their final rally, climbing atop the confederate monuments and draping them with the American flag.

During the latter part of the 60s, Mississippi was truly a state in transition. Grudgingly, but surely, many of the long established traditions of Mississippi's past were giving away to the new day. Still, amid all of the new backlash, **George Wallace** carried Mississippi as an independent candidate in 1968.

National attention shifted from Mississippi to violence and riots in midwestern and eastern cities. The nation focused on the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. Mississippi became less of a social and political problem and more of a social laboratory for progress.

A fitting simile which summarizes the 60s in Mississippi is that of a lamb applied to the month of March. It came in like a lion and went out like a lamb.

POLITICS / Church, Family Is Active Involved

Memphis' Garbage Strike Brings National Attention;

Martin Luther King, Jr. Arrives, Is Shot By Sniper

By Joan Turner Beifuss

(Joan Turner Beifuss was a member of the Sanitation Strike Project which interviewed more than 200 persons involved with the strike and collected other matriculated material. The entire collection, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, is at the Memphis State University Library Special Collections. She is also a part-time English instructor at Memphis State.)

By 1968 there had been 12 years of non-violent mass movement for civil rights among Southern blacks — Montgomery, Ala., Birmingham, Nashville, Albany, across Mississippi.

Americans had seen Negroes march through images of police dogs, flailing nightsticks, fire hoses, being struck with bricks, stones, endlessly marching feet, the "We Shall Overcome" anthem and stamps.

A style of dissatisfaction came to center on the "rainy day policy." Most of the 1,300 sanitation workers, collecting garbage, repairing sewers and gutters, had weathered the rainy could not work. Should they then be sent home? Should they be paid? If so, how much? The city moved back and forth from one to another.

"Man, Memphis was beautiful," said the student. "Blacks were together. It didn't matter if you were a militant or an Uncle Tom." If you were for the sanitation strike, you were a brother."

In late January, 1968, 21 sewer and gutter workers were sent home on a bad day. This brought forth protest from the 1,300-man work force and others.

Then two sanitation workers were killed on the job. Both men were caught in the machinery of one of the old packer trucks. Safety engineers' safety procedures created more tension.

Strike Stuns City

The threat of a strike was in the air. On Sunday night, Feb. 10, hundreds of workers gathered at Clayborn Temple to air their grievances.

"They give us trouble, we'll give them nothin'," yelled one man.

That was the way it was as sanitation workers out of some 1,100 walked out.

It was the start of a campaign that continued both knowledgeable city and labor officials said, "the most massive that many people out in unbelievable." Until March 28, when secretary of the Memphis Labor Council.

A formidable force of off-again-on-again meetings between city and sanitation representatives were to continue for the next seven weeks.

Black Community Support Grows

Knowing that the workers and their families could only get along without help once the paychecks stopped, many different groups in the black community began to help by donating food, time and money to union meetings.

But widest black community involvement came after a marching incident on Main Street on Feb. 23. With permission from the police, prominent black ministers, strikers and their supporters marched from the downtown auditorium to Mason Temple. Some of the marchers were arrested by a police car and over a wooden foot. The strikers near the car began rocking it. Mace sprayed the order, and all along the line police moved in spraying everyone with the tear gas substance.

Out of that macing came the organization of COME — Community on the Move for Equality — becoming the most important groups in the black community. The clergy, many of the civil rights groups, like the NAACP.

Ministers such as James Lawson, Henry Starks, Ezekiel Bell, Billy Kyles and Dr. Bailey Withers came to the strikers' aid.

Daily marches began. Rallies were held night after night in church after church and money was collected for the strikers. There were also at City Council meetings. High school and college students joined the picket lines.

Garbage piled up, although the city managed to keep a number of trucks running. Still the strike dragged on. The City Council was split and could find no solution. Neither could a number of white leaders of good will. Racial prejudice surfaced among both blacks and whites.

Violence Erupts in King March

On March 18, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., came to help. He was deep into planning for the Poor People's Campaign to be held in Washington. He felt deeply that he would be the excitement of 10,000 cheering supporters at Mason Temple, he promised to return to Memphis to lead one march in support of the strikers.

He did, on March 28. But it was not the march that anyone had planned. He or Dr. King's non-violent group around the corner of Beale and Main, Youths began to filter out from the ranks and break store windows. Looting followed. Police moved in to break up the march with mace and night sticks. There was total confusion, yelling, people running every which way, smoke from fires, looting, screams.

Looting and burning broke out in other isolated spots. The National Guard was called in and Memphis was placed under curfew.

Riot Seen Through A Boy's Eyes

There is how that day looked to one little boy. Years later, Dr. Martin Luther King's son was asked to be honorary pallbearer in honor of marching with Dr. King. The boy was fascinated with the newspapers monitoring the march and with hearing the tear gas exploding. He saw people breaking windows and looting stores on Beale. His father took them back to Clayborn Temple "to keep us from getting hurt. Everyone was saying there shouldn't be looting." People came into the church beaten and maced. "Some children were just . . . it was very, very confusing and frightened his eyes. My brother was crying, he is in 1st. One more way to catch a bus home, they saw two drivers attacked." Young Martin wanted to march down Main street and hear Dr. King speak," he said.

Dr. King's reputation was badly shaken for the first time. Looting would come not against but out of a march led by him. He left Memphis vowing that he could lead a peaceful march in Washington when he could not lead one in Memphis! He had little choice but to plan another Memphis march to show people could protest peacefully.

Martin Luther King Gunned Down

Dr. King returned again on April 3. That night he would speak from a platform across the street and a tornado touched down in Millington, 15 miles east of Mason Temple on the map.

I've looked over and I've seen the Promised Land.

I may not get there with you.

But I want you to know tonight

That we as a people will get to the Promised Land.

At 6 p.m. the next evening, April 4, he was shot on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel.

The confessed killer was James Earl Ray, an escaped convict. He had evidently been waiting for him.

Dr. King died at St. Joseph Hospital. The sewer and garbage workers were not large cities. Now the Memphis strike had become a national issue.

President Lyndon Johnson sent federal labor leader James Reynolds to Memphis to get the strike settled.

Twelve days later, that union, with the support of the black community and through the death of a leader, won the strike.

Today, according to Rev. James Smith, who was active in the strike and who heads the local, there are some 7,000 members in the AFSCME Memphis union.

It is an important and responsible force in the life of the city.

Martin Luther King, Jr. (left) Enters His Room At Lorraine Motel The Day Before His Tragic Death

Marchers During Garbage Strike

PROFILES / From Sacker, To Boxer, To Books . . .

Herenton's Come A Long Way . . . Up!

By Dr. Willie W. Herenton

(Dr. Willie W. Herenton has served as superintendent of the Memphis city schools since 1978. He is the first black superintendent in Memphis and currently the only black mayor and leader in Tennessee.)

In 1980 he was selected as one of the top 100 school administrators in the United States and Canada by Executive Educator, a professional journal.

The memoirs rise of Dr. Herenton from extreme poverty to the heights of his profession is an incredible and inspirational story.

Today my recreation room is bigger than the two-room apartment where I was born and lived the first seven years of Crump in South Memphis. Born in 1940, I lived my early life with my mother, grandmother and sister in this tiny apartment.

We were really poor, but we didn't realize it. There was a lot of love and commitment to help each other, a sense of family, which was essential.

Both mother and grandmother worked hard. Mother usually to support us in the summer months my neighborhood was a mixture of poor and modest to middle class, but not affluent. Most of the people in my neighborhood were poor. Over in the west was a very strong determination and perseverance. I've had the inner strength to excel no matter what I've encountered.

I owe a lot to my parents who encouraged me in education. I remember my mother saying, "If you get a good education, no one can take it from you." I believe the Memphis city schools superintendent in 1978.

Being a black superintendent is one of the most difficult and demanding jobs in public life. Having a hard, persistent is always walking a tightrope. Sometimes I have had to make hard decisions. Yet I have attempted to keep the interests of the children uppermost in my mind. I have a strong belief in totally integrated education as a crucial part of the American democratic way of life.

Even though the superintendency cuts into my family time, I consider it a part of a full-time career unity to me. My family consists of Ida, my wife, and my two children — Errol Duke, Rodney Bernard and Andrea Lynn. Like my father, I have always grown up very differently from me. I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth. I was not that she was no stranger to poverty when she met me.

My children haven't experienced the hard knocks of life like I did either. But I am trying to teach them the value of hard work and to do their chores around the house.

While at times it seems I have come a long way, I will never forget the hard lessons of my past. I am constantly growing up in a tiny cramped apartment in South Memphis.

Jesse Turner: A Man Meeting The Challenge

Jesse Turner In Front Of Tri-State Bank

By Patricia F. Morris

(Patricia Morris was a feature writer and columnist for the Memphis Magician, the student newspaper at Lemoyne-Owen College. Miss Morris earned a master's degree in journalism at the University of Iowa. She has chosen as her subject Jesse Turner, one of the city's most influential leaders. Mr. Turner has played a major role in the civil rights struggle. Black Memphians and has been a strong supporter of Lemoyne-Owen's rights efforts.)

"Civil rights are a part of life," said Jesse Turner, executive vice president of Tri-State Bank. Turner has been a person to run around them. Despite delays, he did not leave Memphis any sooner or later.

Jesse Turner's life is proof of this quote. Turner grew up in Longview, Miss., the third of 11 children. His parents, the late Rev. O. J. Turner, a Baptist minister and his wife Annie, moved their family to West Point so that their children could get a better education.

In 1965 Turner attended LeMoyne College on an athletic scholarship. Majoring in math and graduating with honors.

In 1966 and was promoted to an elementary principalship in 1969. This made me the youngest principal in the school system at that time.

Turner resigned my doctorate at Southern Illinois University (1971), I was one of the top school administrators selected from across the country by Harvard and the Rockefeller Foundation's superintendency training program.

While working in the Memphis city schools superintendent in the 70s, I became the Memphis city schools superintendent in 1978.

Being a black superintendent is one of the most difficult and demanding jobs in public life. Having a hard, persistent is always walking a tightrope. Sometimes I have had to make hard decisions. Yet I have attempted to keep the interests of the children uppermost in my mind. I have a strong belief in totally integrated education as a crucial part of the American democratic way of life.

Even though the superintendency cuts into my family time, I consider it a part of a full-time career unity to me. My family consists of Ida, my wife, and my two children — Errol Duke, Rodney Bernard and Andrea Lynn. Like my father, I have always grown up very differently from me. I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth. I was not that she was no stranger to poverty when she met me.

My children haven't experienced the hard knocks of life like I did either. But I am trying to teach them the value of hard work and to do their chores around the house.

While at times it seems I have come a long way, I will never forget the hard lessons of my past. I am constantly growing up in a tiny cramped apartment in South Memphis.

The Challenges Of An Army Career

In 1941 when Jesse Turner was drafted into the Army as a private, he met the challenges of the Army and emerged during World War II, but not as a hero.

Although his entrance test scores were "unusually" high, Turner was sent to cook and bakers' school.

"I determined at that moment that I would accept every martial rather" then become a cook, the only jobber Army would offer me," recalls Col. Knox," Turner says reflecting on the situation.

Many would have resigned themselves to their fate, but Turner, however, personally took his case to superiors' through command, calling attention to his test scores. They decided to train him to become a first sergeant.

In the summer of the following year, Turner received his commission as a second lieutenant. He was assigned to the 92nd black tank unit in the Army, based in Italy.

While at Fort Knox, Turner challenged discriminatory practices at the post, such as not permitting blacks to

(Continued on Page 26)

Something snapped inside me the following summer. I realized I wanted more from life than a professional boxing career. It was then I began to take my education seriously.

Willie W. Herenton

I enjoyed boxing in high school, winning several Golden Gloves and AAU boxing championships. Even though my dream was to become a pro-fessional boxer. In fact, I was more concerned with boxing than books.

After being placed on academic probation my freshman year at LeMoyne College, something mapped inside me the following summer. I re-lized I wanted more from life than a professional boxing career. It was then I began to take my education seriously. I graduated with honors and began graduate school.

In 1968 I graduated from LeMoyne College and received my career as a fifth grade teacher at Shannon Elementary School. I received my master's degree from Memphis State in

'Mudear's' Baby Grows Up

By Maxine A. Smith

(Mrs. Smith is the executive secretary, Memphis branch, NAACP, the South's largest branch. She was selected school board president for 1961. In a survey conducted by The Commercial Appeal in 1977, she was voted the black leader in Memphis she had the power to influence the goals and actions of that group.)

I feel that my roots are deeply imbedded in the soil of this community. I was born in Memphis on Oct. 31, 1923, and I have lived here almost every day since that 54-year period. During this period I attended the public schools, graduated from Booker T. Washington, spent four years as an Air Force bride. Even while away, I always thought of myself as been Memphis.

I was a third of three children born to the late Joseph P. Atkins and Georgia Beasley Atkins. I was remember as an early age overhearing my mother, who was usually call "Mudear," jokingly tell of her disappointment at her pregnancy that resulted in my birth. When I expressed my "hurt" feelings, she would laugh, but dear reminded me that nobody wanted babies in 1923—particularly girl babies. Being born on Halloween, I have since taken my personal comfort in being the "treat" rather than the "trick."

I can't say that we were among the wealthiest of the Negro postman and his wife. Our family, which was not built on the "good" side of town, but on the new home for low income families, Parkway East, where I lived until I married Dr. Russell Sugarmon.

My father passed away when I was nine, my brother, Joseph, and my sister Clementine. (L He is best remembered by me for his proud and silent spoken man, as well as a stick man. From him I inherited my physical weakness, which I have passed on to our one son, Smitty.

Mudear was often worried as to whether daddy would be fired for being more outspoken than his white fellow workers, but he was in those days. This too, I think, I inherited from him.

I was known as the anger and defiance in me when told not to refer to my father as "Mister" when I visited him at the hospital. I can also remember the hurt when we black children attending the circus and were moved from "humanity's row" to the North Hall of the Auditorium in order to accommodate the great number of white children. We were sent to the "Colored Water Fountain" and could peep through the open curtains. There we knew a lion was in the cage on the floor but none of the real circus acts that were being put on the higher platform.

So many such incidents I could recall, but in hindsight, a more important reminder that too much of that kind of memory can produce cynicism and shyness its potential growth. It is a mandate that I feel we must work together to overcome.

I attended Booker T. in the third grade and later finished Booker T. Washington. I was not a bright student. Being born on Halloween, I have since taken my personal comfort in being the "treat" rather than the "trick."

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To Become Civic Leader

"I am perhaps one of the most misunderstood people in our town. I don't hate as some would believe; I truly have a great love affair with all mankind."

As we eagerly returned to Memphis after the Christmas holidays, we wondered, "Why all the enthusiasm?" Despite the fact that Beale Hill where a few of us could realized would greet us upon return. We knew that a new "Deal" was expected all that.

It was a year at LeMoyne College, Memphis, Tennessee, the South's only Negro liberal arts college for black students. Our enthusiasm was the result of excitement over the fact that we were on vacation and it also was the dread of the nature of my work.

In the summer of 1957, I made a fateful decision to join Memphis State. This attracted the attention of the NAACP and Somehow I was born with it in some capacity ever since — exactly five secretary since 1963. Some of the roles I filled between 1957 and 1962 with the NAACP were those of branch chairman, director of voter education and voter registration drives, and director of the sit-in movement of 1960-61.

Because of the nature of my work, my unrelenting refusal to compromise with discrimination, segregation, whitesupremacy opportunities, churches, skating rinks, hamburger establishments, and almost all public facilities and accommodations.

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Teaching Suggestions for "Black Heritage"

This tabloid is for use by the total school population. The black heritage is a vital part of Memphis history. When correlated with the traditional curriculum, students can develop an appreciation of their classmates' heritage, regardless of creed or race. The personal experiences of the individual should be studied in conjunction with narratives and excerpts of other authorities and writers.

The creativity and interest of students can be stimulated because the use of the Newspaper in the classroom program. Students are not you are not limited to the suggestions presented here. You will want to use The Commercial Appeal in connection with your particular needs, events and issues when those of today.

It is not the purpose of this tabloid to be all-inclusive. In some instances there will be omissions of certain facts. These omissions are largely unintentional. Please call them to our attention, however.

Some excellent resources are at your disposal. One is the Memphis Room at the Main Library. How many have visited this room? The bibliography, "Selected Sources in Memphis Black History," Other resources are the Black Archives at Memphis State University, the Institute at Memphis State University library (listed Special Collections in the card catalog), the Memphis Public Library and Archives, the Memorial, and Shelby County Archives.

You may wish to contact Bruce Evans although not heavily featured in this tabloid, his is one of the truly outstanding photographic collections.

If you are particularly interested in reading some of the books mentioned in the bibliography, check with your school librarian. Many of these books may be ordered for use by you or future students at your school.

One general suggestion for comparing and contrasting the different sections of this tabloid is to divide the class into groups with your classroom wall.

You may wish to make a map of Memphis to post on the classroom wall. Locate and mark on the map such places as:

Old Main	Beale Street
Fort Pickering	Beale Street Baptist
Fort Wright	Board of Education
Your Church	The Peabody Hotel
Your Home	Washington Park
LeMoyne-Owen	Beale Street Baptist
Shelby County Jail	Lorde School

Cover

Correlate each picture with one or more of the sections in the tabloid. Example: Picture of Beale Street Baptist Church on the cover. Use the table of contents to locate material, including pictures. Following this activity, you may want to play a game, such as jeopardy, with these materials in the tabloid.

Preserving the Past, Page 2

Think what a service you could provide to your community, school and family by preserving the past in your area.

Using a tape recorder is the best method for conducting interviews. If tape equipment is not available, however, a pen or pencil will do.

Use Dr. McDaniel's 10 questions for class discussions or as examples for developing your own list of questions for interviews.

Finally, this information should be saved and stored in your school library or a public library. Check with your librarian before you do so, however.

Why not have a class history of your school, community and family and collect old photographs? Ask for help from your parents, grandparents and relatives. A historian writes a book or two, or may be very interested in what you were able to preserve.

Profiles, Page 3

Do you have any cartographer in your community? Maybe some of you would like to interview these people.

The Taylor Collection, Page 4

Dr. Taylor's collection of photographs is of great social and historical value because it reveals much about black heritage. The entire collection is housed in the Memphis Room at the Main Library. See Publishers, Page 4.

Compare the uniforms worn in the top pictures with those worn today.

The bottom photos relate to business and social life. Make comparisons of early and today's life.

Books Picture Page, Page 5

The Books Collection is an extremely valuable one.

The photo of the Spirit of Beale Street airplane contains the original outlines from an old World War livers newspaper. Compare the first sentence in the caption with today.

Notice the pride of the old Peabody Hotel staff. Do you think this pride is present today? Why or why not?

Have you ever been to the Orpheum? Compare the old with the interesting social situation. Notice where whites and blacks are seated. Look at the ticket prices. Compare the cost of living with today's prices.

Perhaps you can meet the challenges it faces like Jesse Turner has met his. The future will be bright indeed.

Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation. Tri-State also provided loans to black farmers who had been discriminated against.

When hundreds of sanitation workers were jailed and fined shortly afterwoon in 1968, the union leader came rushing to Tri-State Bank. He borrowed $14,000 to secure their release," Turner said, as another example of the bank's involvement in community conditions.

Political And Professional Life

Since making Memphis his home, Jesse Turner has been active in several political and professional organizations. He was a charter member and national board member of the NAACP. He was elected to the city council from the 5th district in 1964, 1972 and again in 1978.

Turner is married to the former Alcegra Will. The five Turner children catalyze the family's religious and principles which their parents received.

"The best potential for success is an education, and religious and community training," says Turner.

As for the future of the community, he notes, "Memphis has improved considerably. However, it has a long way to go."

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'Lost Children' Need Help From Americans

(Continued from Page 25)

around the globe and it will not fall. The wheel of black people is broken and the pieces must be put back in place before the race can ever roll again.

The development of Africa and the reunification of black people is one and the same. The lost children have everything that Africa needs in order to develop. Africa is the only hope for the vindication of black people.

The day has come for the reunification of black people. This must be our main goal. All of the children's problems can be found in this same fund. The wheel of the black race must be put back together as a whole.

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'A Strong Financial Leader' Is Turner Joins Tri-State Bank

The challenging post to use the school's swimming pool.

Jesse Turner's long, frequent trips between Fort Knox, Memphis and Dallas will be curtailed as he settles back into from the train because he insisted on using telephone booths and airport facilities.

"There was hardly a time when I came through Memphis that I was not called upon to help someone with a CPA practice, he is executive vice president of Tri-State Bank. The bank's resources have grown to $30.7 million.

"If blacks are to succeed, they must have economic independence," says Turner. "They must have a strong financial base.

Not only does the Tri-State Bank serve as the financial hub for the black community, it has served as a catalyst for significant changes in late 50s and 60s.

The bank was the central location for black leaders to gather and discuss issues of the day.

Plans to knock down the walls of segregation were hatched there, so, to; to integrate the public libraries; and, finally, to desegregate the lunch counters.

Turner, who is a native Memphian, he notes, "Memphis has improved considerably. However, it has a long way to go.

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My education has been made in a city that was completely segregated (with the exception of a few white students at Memphis State) as late as 1962. I realize that all areas the

Maxine Smith

NAACP challenged (in most cases successfully) through direct action, political clout, and court action, would perhaps remain the same today were it not for these challenges.

These challenged areas include schools, buses, the city auditorium, parks, fairgrounds, the downtown college and universities, libraries, an amusement and gallery, lunch counters, restaurants, fall, bus and air terminals, restrooms, water fountains, employment opportunities, churches, skating rinks, hamburger establishments, and almost all public facilities and accommodations.

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Teaching Suggestions for "Black Heritage"

Role Models For Youth, Page 4

Investigate these pictures. Especially note the facial expressions. What do they tell you about these leaders and their children? Look in The Commercial Appeal to find other family pictures.

Be sure to use the investigative techniques you have learned as you view pictures in the rest of the section.

Unrecorded History, Page 7

Douglass School became a community center during the depression. Why? Who were the meetings and conferences that took place at your school? Do you have any particularly exciting stories?

Take a walking tour of the downtown area. Contact Beverly Kennedy for a list of the many points of interest and buildings mentioned in the tabloid, such as T. H. Hayes & Sons Funeral Home at 406 Beale Street? How many homes and buildings on Beale Street still have building markings? Can you find any old street signs? Compare the old with the new. Why not have a class or personal scrap book of pictures described as in the past?

Do some research on public lynchings in the late 1800's to see how many crimes people were lynched for and what you have felt if you had been his ill. Write the night she fled?

Find out more about Ernest Withers. What did he learn from this experience?

Heroes Remembered, Page 8

Tom Lee Park on the Mississippi River stands as a monument for bravery. Are there other parks, streets, buildings or churches named for local heroes or others? List them.

What characteristics does a "hero" have? List a few of your own heroes. Why do you feel they are heroes to you?

Do you think Nat Kiser was a hero? Why or why not? What about the Iranian hostages?

Beale Street, Page 9

Using this article, write a paper in which you defend Memphis as "Home of the Blues."

Interview members of students will enjoy interviews. Each pair will perform an interview in front of the class. Then the class will question the interviewers on the purpose of the interview. Jones and another student will be W. C. Handy. Conduct an interview. Write a paper describing the interview and your feelings about it.

Write a paper in which you describe a scene on Beale Street at the turn of the century. What things would you like to see that are no longer on Beale Street? Why do you think they were removed? Mosquitoes today?

Using the following terms: minstrels, bellhikers, field recording, blues, Lillian Glass, Memphis Minnie, Memphis Slim, Sun Records, guitarists, jug bands, boxer, crooner.

Check out the book, *Beale Street: Where The Blues Began.*

How is primitive blues different from Handy's, Alberta Hunter's and Memphis Minnie's? Which blues singers are famous in Europe? Which blues singers are famous in Japan?

Compare the two pictures of a musician at black people? (Notice the opening paragraph.)

Why is Beale Street blues song, using the author's instructions as a guide? Compare some blues to Shakespearean lines as to readability.

Read some examples of the poetry of Langston Hughes and make reports.

Music Puts Mississippi on Map, Page 10

Locate a Mississippi map and post it on the wall. Find the musicians mentioned in this article and put a star in these spots on the map.

Do you want to take a field trip to the Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale.

Black Music Leads the Way, Page 11

How Lee Morgan did the song in a paper? Does he draw or more examples of musicians and/or studios from Memphis.

Make a poster illustrating one of the musical terms from the three music articles in this section.

Do you like Memphis Slim and its artists, 35 Records and its artists. Do research on the Memphis Sun Sound. What was singular about it? Compare it to Memphis Slim and its artists.

Novels Disclose History, Page 12

For the most part, Dr. Juanita Williamson focuses on black novelists. Find out what you can about Richard Wright. Read one of his short story writers, examples, political writers, etc. You may try to contrast a book written by a black author with one by a white.

Compare the life of the writers. For example, Wright and Ellison. Read. His prose is exciting and has lots of similes and metaphors. He was an orator and this shows through in his writing.

Alex Haley's *Roots* should be read and discussed in connection with the novels mentioned in this section (Page 12) or previous books.

Read passages from Gone With The Windand Jubilee comparing the two books as to readability. Which is the easier to read?

Review from each of the novels mentioned in this section.

Churches Preserve History, Page 13

What were the two schools of thought in regard to whether there is a valid black religion or not? Do research on this topic. Hold a debate in which one student proceeds to be W. E. B. Dubois and the other is E. Franklin Frazier.

Try to find information about other great religious leaders (such as L.S. Owen) and other important denominations in Memphis. Hold how often the religious leaders are key political and civic leaders. Start a bulletin board on religion, using articles from The Commercial Appeal. There is a weekly religion column on Saturday.

Schools Were Sad Shambles Now Creatively, Page 14

Schools were for whites only in 1858. How would you have felt about this and the other laws of the day? Which of these laws would you have broken? Why?

Find out more about the race riots of 1866 at your school or public library. Write a report on your findings.

While the story of Lemoyne is an esoteric, fuller article in The Commercial Appeal dealing with tax money for public education? Did this was the first year that black students were admitted to Memphis State.

Do the early 1900s black citizens raised money to buy the Mississippi River. What was this project?

In Race T Hunt's picture, he is holding a ball. He always carried this ball with him. Ask him about this ball and why he was not playing it. He simply held it by the clipper. He was so respected, but everyone always carried one. Find out more about this ball from pastor at the Pink Palace or at the library.

The Civil Rights movement was the events of the Memphis school board. What are the major issues faced by the current school board?

Integration Sparks Civil Rights, Page 15

How do you think students felt about going to segregated schools? Interview students who were involved in the sit-ins. Have a class survey on what they would do if necessary were this law.

From your teacher, obtain a school directory to find out if your parents organized a sit-in. Ask your parents to write to the appropriate letter to this teacher, informing him or her of where you are now and your present occupation.

What role can you as a student perform in helping to improve your school? Are there problems that are currently in your school? Write a list of your concerns and discuss them with your teacher.

1972-73 Job questions of the picture. For example, who turned the lights on? Why? Who is the principal, and why?

Go to your library or the public library and try to learn more about the Memphis Board of Education. Who are the members? Who is the superintendent? Write a letter to some of the members of the board.

Do you think the school system has gained more or lost more by desegregation? Write and discuss.

Higher Education in Memphis, Page 16

According to Dr. Hollis Price, when did LeMoyne and Owen merge?

Conduct a teacher poll at your school and list the colleges which teachers attended. Ask them why they chose these colleges as opposed to others. Ask them to name some of the colleges.

Black Athletes Scale Heights, Page 16, 17

At the public library you can find newspaper articles on the 1972 Memphis State team that went on an undefeated season of three and make a report to the class. One group of students may want to write a letter giving Perkins, Alcindor and Walton.

See if you can find support for Art Gillian's statement about Finch and Memphis State in 1972.

Why was Gene Barlow a special coach? Is the coach at your school special?

Research the great race of Jesse Owens. Which were the great ones? Who were the outstanding players?

Try to find out more about Bo Mitchell, Page 17.

Business and Civic Leaders, page 18

See the Church Family Collection at the Memphis State Library Newspaper Clipping Collection.

The Churches, T. O. Fuller, Ida B. Wells, J. E. Walker are featured in the Pink Palace Museum, along with other prominent Memphians. Make reports and do posters on each of these great Memphians. How did the Churches and others aid in the struggle for equality?

Minority Businesses, page 19

Notice some of the statistics at the beginning of Fred Davis' article. Why do you think they are the way they are? Black and not only one per cent of the business activity is black?

Make posters illustrating the different businesses mentioned.

Read the business section of The Commercial Appeal weekly to find out more about black businesses in Memphis.

Using The Commercial Appeal, you can start clip files on individuals who are financially successful such as Fred Davis, A. Maceo Walker, Fred Smith, etc.

The Church Family, Page 20

Do research on the yellow fever epidemic. Discuss it.

Interview someone who was a grown up during the 1940's in many ways. Does it surprise you that blacks were elected to public offices in the 1880's? Read the article on Robert Church and find out others. Compare the achievements of blacks in politics (1865-1890) with their achievements in other areas during this same time period.

(Continued on Page 28)

NIC Teaching Suggestions, Continued

(Continued from Page 27)

What factors caused a decline in the number of blacks in public office in Memphis?

Try to find census figures and chart the growth of the Memphis population from the early 1800s to the present.

List at least four important facts about Robert Church, Sr. and Robert Church, Jr. Compare Robert Church, Sr. to A. Maceo Walker today.

Do research on how the NAACP got its start. Roberta and Annette Church's book, *The Robert R. Churches of Memphis*, is a very good source.

During the first half of this century Memphis had more black voters than most other cities of its size. Why was this? What role did Robert Church, Jr., play in this? What about Ed Crump?

Correlate what you learn in the business section about the two Churches and J. E. Walker with what you learn here. Make posters on each of these.

How is the black role in the Republican and Democrat parties different today from in the past?

Is there a voter organization now similar to the Lincoln League of the 1930s to organize and register black voters?

Does your mayor today have as much political power as "Boss" Ed Crump did in the 1930s?

From The Commercial Appeal clip and save pictures of local public officials, state representatives and school board members.

Mississippi Has Growing Pains, page 21

Conduct a class survey to find out if any of your classmates' parents, friends or relatives were participants in any of the civil rights marches in Mississippi in the 60s.

Role play interviews with leaders of the 60s.

What were the major civil rights issues in the early 60s? How had they expanded by the late 60s? What were some of the major breakthroughs? What changes evolved in your community?

Try to find speeches by some of the leaders. Present the differing viewpoints of Martin Luther King and Stokely Carmichael. Put their names on the board. List pros and cons for each.

Compare Martin Luther King's peaceful philosophy with that of Mahatma Gandhi and Henry David Thoreau. What does civil disobedience mean?

Why did James Meredith march across Mississippi? What happened to him? Would you have joined in the Meredith march? Why? Why not? What would have been your feelings during such a march? Draw the Meredith march on a map of Mississippi.

How do the civil rights leaders of the 60s compare with those active in the 1800s (Underground Railroad, etc.).

Can you find other examples of blacks striving for equal rights before the 50s and 60s? Ida B. Wells, Niagara Movement, etc.

What are some of the black leaders of the 60s doing today?

Using The Commercial Appeal begin a clip file on people in other countries who are undergoing similar civil rights activities in the 1980s. Some examples are Poland, South Africa, the Caribbean Islands, etc.

Sanitation Strike, page 22

What were some of the complaints of the sanitation workers? How did they go about trying to get a better work situation? Do you agree or disagree with what they did?

One of the students can read aloud how the riot was seen through a boy's eyes. How would you have felt if you had been there?

Compare what is said about Henry Loeb here with what Fred Davis says about him on page 19.

Go to the Mississippi Valley Collection at Memphis State Library and conduct research on some of the leaders during the sanitation strike.

Interview some of your teachers as to where they were when Martin Luther King, Jr. was shot. What were they doing that day? What do they remember feeling?

Follow the AFSCME union and other labor organizations' present activities in The Commercial Appeal.

Willie W. Herenton, Page 23

Describe Dr. Herenton's living conditions as a child.

Dr. Herenton says there weren't any role models in his neighborhood when he was growing up. Who pushed or inspired him to excel?

What jobs did Dr. Herenton hold as a child?

What were the inequities in black and white schools in the 50s and 60s? Find other differences than the ones named in this article. You may want to interview someone in this regard.

Why do you think Dr. Herenton would say that he wanted more out of life than a professional boxing career? How would you feel if you had to make that decision?

What are Dr. Herenton's comments about the superintendency?

Keep up with Dr. Herenton's decisions and accomplishments as he performs the difficult job as Memphis city schools superintendent.

Compare and contrast Dr. Herenton, Dr. Hollis Price (Page 15) or Blair T. Hunt.

Jesse Turner, Page 23

Discuss Jesse Turner's quote about meeting challenges head-on. Can you remember times in your life when you were met with a challenge? How did you handle it?

Jesse Turner says, "Memphis has improved considerably. However, it still has a long way to go." List some ways Memphis can improve.

Harold Ford, Page 24

What is Harold Ford's family history?

Does your family discuss its history? Talk to your parents and grandparents. Write a few paragraphs about your family to be read aloud or discussed in class.

What are the reasons that Harold Ford was able to rise so high from such humble beginnings?

How did the death of John Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. affect Harold Ford? Why did Harold Ford enter politics?

Take each of the points under Harold Ford's advice for young people and discuss them. Do some activities around each of these four points. For example, you can make posters to demonstrate the accomplishments of blacks. You can find examples of people who believed that all things are possible. Discuss statements of great people's philosophies of life. Do you have a personal philosophy of life that you can write down? Make a bulletin board display of people who believed in themselves. You may wish to create a bulletin board on role models in which you include all of the above four suggestions.

Pretend to have Harold Ford as a "guest for the day" in your classroom. Have one student be a reporter and act as interviewer. Have "Harold Ford" field questions from the class.

Read and discuss the quote in this article by Martin Luther King, Jr. What would Dr. King say today if he could "peek back over the mountain?" Would he be more pleased or displeased about how his torch has been carried?

Compare and contrast the lives of Harold Ford and Robert R. Church, Jr.

Africa Still Developing, Page 25

Before reading the article, have a discussion about what you think James Meredith might be doing today. Then look at the biography at the beginning of the story.

Discuss and interpret James Meredith's opening sentence about what the goals for blacks in the 80s should be. Do you agree or disagree?

Read aloud and discuss the U.S. AID report. Compare and contrast the education, income and economic opportunities here in the United States to that of most countries in Africa (using the chart on page 25).

What are your thoughts on black reunification in Africa?

Do you think black Americans should help black Africans?

Look at the map of Africa and locate black African countries. Compare the size of each country to the state in which you live, the size of the continent of Africa to the U.S. Locate major cities in each country.

Maxine Smith, Page 26

Why does Mrs. Smith say that her roots are deeply imbedded in the fiber of this community? Consider not only the opening paragraph but the rest of the article as well.

Find at least three examples of unfair treatment to blacks.

Can you find places in the article where Mrs. Smith reveals her love for Memphis, for humanity?

Take the quote at the top of the third column and discuss it. What are the reasons which Mrs. Smith gives for this misunderstanding.

Can you think of other leaders who have been misunderstood? For what reasons? By whom? Have there been times when you were misunderstood? How did it make you feel?

What are some areas in which the NAACP has made progress? What are some areas the group is working toward today?

What were some things you learned about Mrs. Smith from this article that you did not know before?

Consider the following questions:

What are the similarities in the four profiles in regard to the importance of education? What about the role of the family in each?

What would Robert Church, Sr. or T. H. Hayes have to say about business in Memphis today?

What would Julia Hooks, J. A. Hayes or Blair T. Hunt have to say about education?

What would J. E. Walker say about current politics?

What would Ida B. Wells think about civil rights today?

How are your impressions of the leaders in this tabloid different after having read about them? How do these civic leaders promote good human relations?

Do you have any people you look up to in your community? If so, who are they and why do you look up to them? If not, who would be a good role model for you in your community? Most great leaders have had role models who helped them by example and guidance. If you had to pick five role models from this tabloid, which would you select and why?

Follow today's leaders in The Commercial Appeal. Maintain a file to keep up with their efforts and accomplishments. You may want to keep a scrapbook on your favorite ones.

Family Projects

The family is considered the foundation of society. Describe the family background of each writer in the tabloid. Why are family relationships so important?

From The Commercial Appeal, find news stories of family events and accomplishments.

How do family members help each other? How does the community and church help families in time of need?

Gather together old family pictures and develop a family scrapbook, including details of the events of long ago. Locate on a map the first home in which you lived. Draw a picture from memory of it.

Prepare a list of things you feel have been your greatest personal achievements, including experiences in church, school or community.

You may wish to write to some of the contributors to tell them how you liked their article. Also, the Newspaper in the Classroom program would be very interested in any feedback. For correspondence, use the following addresses:

Center for Southern Folklore, 1216 Peabody, Memphis, TN 38104; Charles Hooks, 1505 Estill, Memphis, TN 38109; Ernest Withers, 280 Hernando, Memphis, TN 38103; Selma Lewis, 155 Cherry Rd., Memphis, TN 38117; Marjean Kremer, 6618 Conifer Cove, Germantown, TN 38138;

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Jesse Turner, Tri-State Bank Bldg., 180 South Main, Memphis, TN 38103; The Honorable Harold Ford, Federal Office Bldg., Memphis, TN 38103;

Dr. James Meredith, P. O. Box 18028, Jackson, MS 39209; Mrs. Maxine Smith, NAACP Hdqtrs., 1188 Minna Place, Memphis, TN 38104;

Newspaper in the Classroom, The Commercial Appeal, 495 Union Ave., Memphis, TN 38101.

Teacher Response Section

1) Was The Commercial Appeal's "Black Heritage" tabloid helpful to you and your class? Why or why not?

2) At what grade level are your students?

3) Which article in the tabloid was your favorite and why?

4) Which was your least favorite and why?

5) Which activities from the teaching suggestions did your students enjoy most?

6) Did you or your students design any interesting activities which were not mentioned in the teaching suggestions?

7) In what ways could the tabloid be improved?

Please clip and send this response form to:
Newspaper in the Classroom
The Commercial Appeal
495 Union Ave.
Memphis, TN 38101